THE FACE, THE MIND, THE TEXT: READING FOR CHARACTER IN THE NOVELS OF ANN RADCLIFFE

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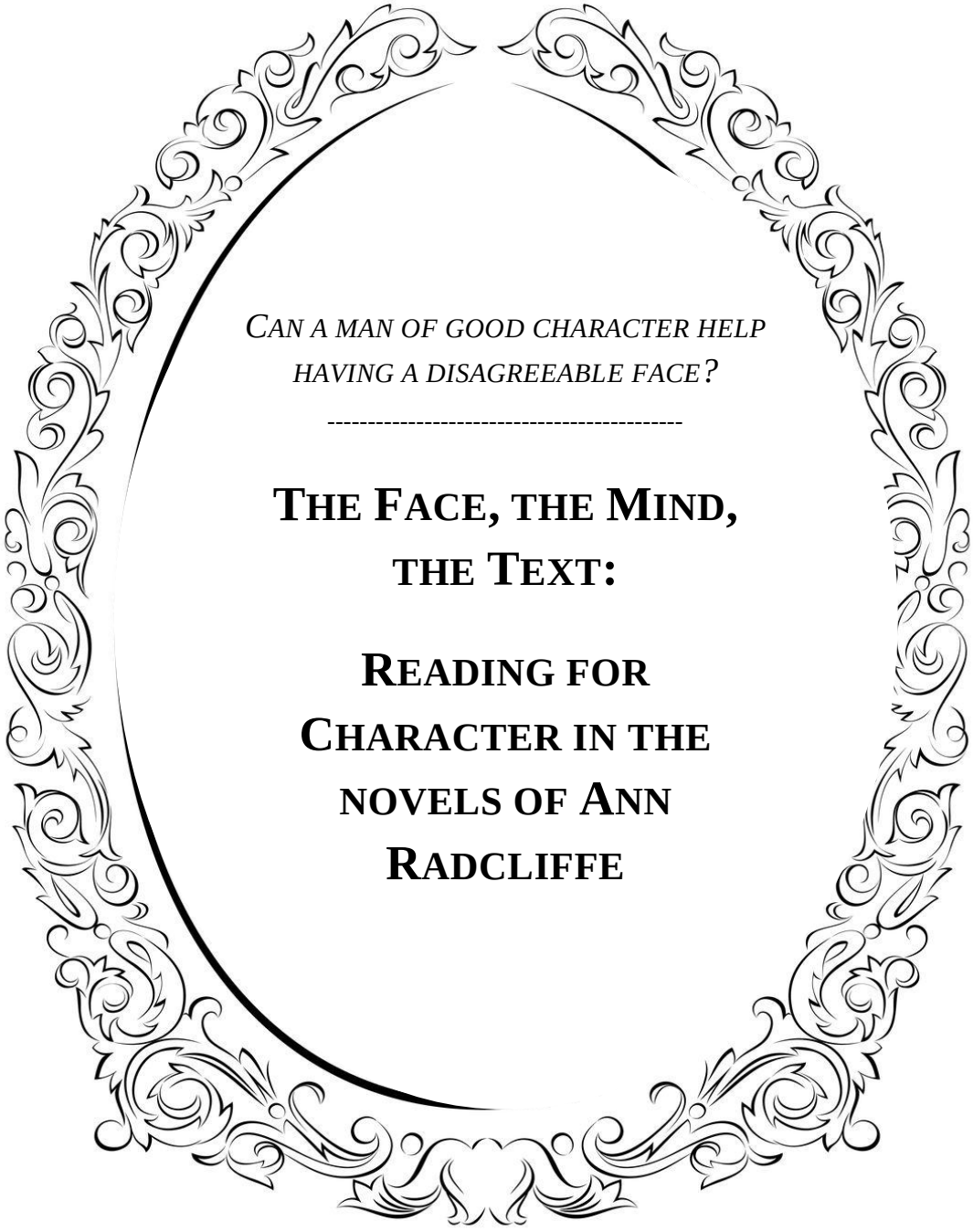

CAN A MAN OF GOOD CHARACTER HELP HAVING A DISAGREEABLE FACE?

THE FACE, THE MIND, THE TEXT:

READING FOR CHARACTER IN THE NOVELS OF ANN RADCLIFFE

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR

MASTERS BY RESEARCH IN ENGLISH STUDIES

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Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Critics have noted that Gothic literary criticism often replicates the nature of the form it critiques. Consequently, my thesis felt at times as though it was continually expanding. This expansion, which is not only a constitutive aspect of the Sublime experience, is also, as Gary Kelly notes, Radcliffe's approach to writing.

In a project of this nature there have been many people who have helped me along the way. At the University of Durham I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Dr O'Connell for her continued support throughout the writing of this dissertation. Her advice and patience has been invaluable. Thanks must also go to the archivists at the British Library, the DeWitt Library and Chawton House Library. During my search for illustrated editions of Ann Radcliffe novels they were helpful and kind every step of the way. The British Society for Eighteenth Century Studies' invitation to share parts of this dissertation as a paper at their annual conference in January 2012 and 2013 meant I was able to gain from the experience and lively debate of other researchers. Additionally, receiving the BSECS President's Prize gave me the much needed confidence to persevere. Finally, I could not have completed this dissertation without the help of my parents; it is written for them.

INTRODUCTION

Ann Radcliffe's novels held an extraordinary power over her contemporaries. In *Lives of the Novelists* Sir Walter Scott describes the excitement that greeted the publication of Ann Radcliffe's fourth novel in 1794, 'when a family was numerous, the volumes flew, and were sometimes torn from hand to hand, and the complaints of those whose studies were thus interrupted were a general tribute to the genius of the author.'[1] The expectation attendant upon the publication of Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* reflects the extent of her popularity and she was referred to as 'the Shakespeare of Romance Writers.'[2]

After the height of her fame in the eighteenth century Radcliffe's reputation dwindled, only to rise again in the late 1970s when literary theorists and post-structuralists began to champion Gothic as a genre. When Ellen Moers first used the term 'Female Gothic' in *Literary Women* she used it to define 'the work that women writers have done in the literary mode that, since the eighteenth century, we have called 'the Gothic.' A definition of 'the Gothic' was, she admitted, less easily stated, 'except that it has to do with fear.'[3] Moers' analysis of Female Gothic texts as a coded expression of women's fears of entrapment in domestic environments and within the female body was extremely influential. It not only generated a body of critical work that focused on the ways in which the Female Gothic articulated women's dissatisfactions with patriarchal society, addressing the problematic position of the maternal within that society, but also placed the Gothic at the centre of the female tradition. The approaches to texts based on this tradition fore-grounded the importance of the narrative of the persecuted heroine in flight from a villainous father or, as Kate Ferguson Ellis's study prioritizes, the role of the Gothic Castle as a prison.[4]

[1] Sir Walter Scott, *Lives of the Novelists* Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: William Brown, 1825), p. 195.
[2] Nathan Drake, *Literary Hours or Sketches Critical and Narrative* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1970), p. 34.
[3] Ellen Moers, *Literary Women* (New York: Doubleday &Co Inc, 1976), p. 90.
[4] Kate Ferguson Ellis, *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

However, the application of feminist readings to the work of Ann Radcliffe has struggled to reconcile the contradictions inherent in Radcliffe's texts. Furthermore, Radcliffe does not easily fit into the fashionable topics often favoured by Gothic scholars. By the 1990s, post-structuralism's destabilizing of the categories of gender and the stability of the unified subject, meant that the term 'Female Gothic' was being increasingly challenged. As a result, there were numerous studies that explored the links between queer theory and the Gothic. For example, Paulina Palmer's *Lesbian Gothic*: *Transgressive Fictions* was based on the understanding that 'Gothic' and 'queer' share a common emphasis on transgressive acts and subjectivities.[5]

A review of the journal *Gothic Studi*es, first published in 1999, reveals a litany of glamorous topics: monstrosity and the post-human; sexuality; queer theory; the abject; post-colonial; medical humanities; pathologies. However, since 1999 *Gothic Studies* have published only four articles on Ann Radcliffe. While Radcliffe's texts do not easily fit into many of the topics favoured by the *Gothic Studies* journal this has not stopped literary scholars from placing Radcliffe's novels in a variety of different categories: Gothic, Sentimental, and Pre-Romantic. Additionally, her texts have been used as examples of feminist theory, psychoanalysis and post-structuralism. While these approaches capture some aspects of her achievement, they neglect others.

In fact, the definition of Ann Radcliffe's texts as 'Gothic' has functioned to veil and obscure fundamental aspects of her texts, including her approach to character. As a result of this anachronistic categorisation, critical treatments of Radcliffe have focused on textual features that reinforce this description. James Watt's *Contesting the Gothic* helpfully challenged the homogeneity of the Gothic genre and Ann Radcliffe's place within it. Consequently, my approach to Radcliffe continues in the spirit of Watt's attempt to look beyond the

[5] Paulina Palmer, *Lesbian Gothic: Transgressive Fictions* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd., 1999).

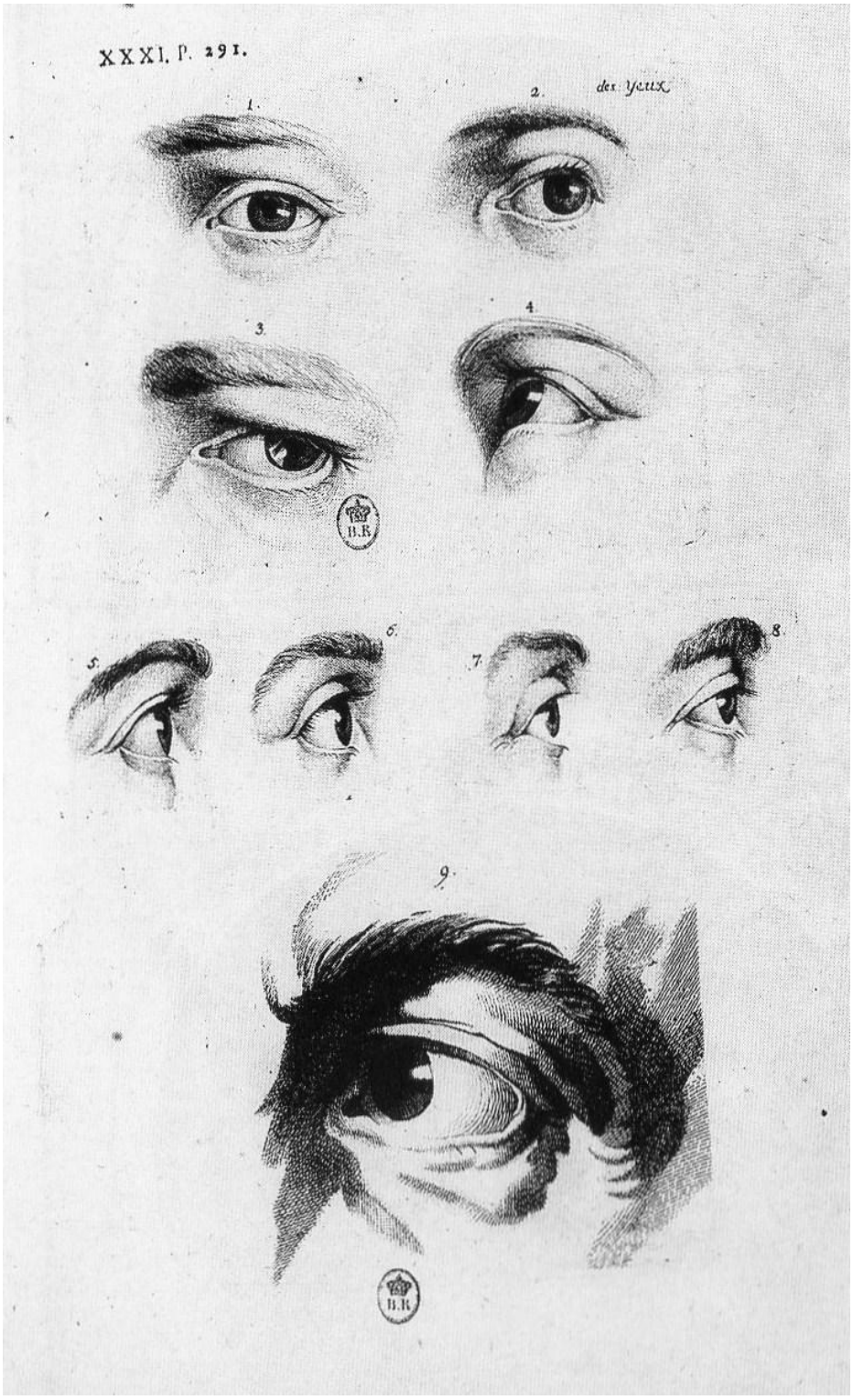
conventions of plot, setting and the 'supernatural explained' to the text that remains. In Radcliffe's case, the text that remains is substantial.

The first chapter of this thesis will explore Radcliffe's approach to characterisation in the context of eighteenth-century traditions. Through an analysis of Radcliffe's characterisation, the importance of the visual field emerges and becomes the focus of the second chapter. In the second chapter, the connection between the discourse of physiognomy and Radcliffe's characterisation is explored. Physiognomy is established as a key discourse underpinning Radcliffe's epistemological viewpoint throughout her fiction. The connections between Radcliffe's fiction and the discourse of physiognomy have been under-researched and I believe offer an important context for understanding the aims of Radcliffe's fiction. Finally, in chapter three the role of portraiture and aesthetic theory is explored; its connections with the discourse of physiognomy are clear and further reinforce the importance of vision as an epistemological concept within Radcliffe's novels. Chapter three is also concerned with the wider textual nature of Radcliffe's penultimate novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and uses the idea of Derrida's parergon to reconsider the relationship between the body and the landscape in her fiction. However, the application of theory is approached carefully and I attempt to use theory to amplify texts rather than texts as an amplification of theory. Finally, quantitative text mining techniques are used to create a visualisation of the changing prominence of certain themes within Radcliffe's five published texts. Owing to the nature of these methods, these findings are presented as a visualisation rather than a statement of objective scientific fact. However, the graphs produced do help to illustrate the importance of the visual field for Radcliffe.

There has been a critical inclination to ignore the role of character in Radcliffe's texts. Scholarly study has usually focused on the role of female agency or used her texts as a vehicle for theory and analysis of power. As such, the subtleties and the language of Radcliffe's texts have often been ignored. Her texts are deeply interested in the workings of the mind and in the concept of interiority. It is one of the central tenets of this dissertation that the connection between body, mind and text is fundamental to Radcliffe's writing. Consequently, in order to accommodate Radcliffe's development of a complex interdependence between body, mind and text the concept of 'character' must be redefined to refer to the text as a whole. The 'character' of Radcliffe's texts does not reside in one individual hero or heroine. Potentially this focus falls foul of what Toril Moi once described as an 'integrated humanist individual' approach to the literary text.[6] However, far from assuming an analogy between the wholeness of the text and the self, Radcliffe's novels, particularly *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* challenged this very concept of wholeness.

[6] Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London: Methuen, 1985).

CHAPTER ONE: THE MIND



INTRODUCTION

The first section of this chapter will consider the literary tradition of characterisation in the early eighteenth century and its impact on Radcliffe's style of characterisation. Secondly, the chapter will consider the development of the language of feeling in Radcliffe's texts, arguing that the narrative role of secrets, framing devices, embedded poetry, aesthetic theory and the convention of the 'unspeakable' are all used to construct the inward life of her characters. Finally, this chapter will consider evidence from Radcliffe's texts to suggest that the development of the language of interiority is the result of a complex and composite model of the mind-body relation. Ultimately, the internal thoughts of Radcliffe's characters are most accessible when they are expressed through the body, particularly the face.

CHARACTERISATION: SURFACE VS. DEPTH IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NOVEL

Analysis of literary characterisation during the eighteenth century developed alongside the focus on the rise of the novel in the period. Critical studies of character in recent years have focused on the textual and cultural practices that constitute the creation of character. Consequently, studies such as *The One vs the Many*, *Nobody's Story* and *The Economy of Character* have attempted to step beyond the previously drawn definitions of 'surface' versus 'depth' which characterised many studies of character since Forster's famous essay.[7] However, while recent criticism has done much to develop the analysis of character in the period it is vital to remember that 'character' remained a contested term in the eighteenth century itself. Most importantly, the history of the scholarly definition of literary character has influenced the reputation of Ann Radcliffe's texts.

[7] Alex Woloch, *The One vs. the Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Deidre Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998); E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (London: Penguin, 2005).

Ian Watt's influential study *The Rise of the Novel*, published in 1957, argued that one of the unique features of the novel was its concentration on the individual.[8] The modern understanding of the individual, an understanding Watt prioritizes, is grounded in a belief in the importance of inwardness and psychological 'depth'. However, Katharine Maus' study *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance* argued that 'inwardness' was not discovered in the eighteenth century but was a concept also used during the Renaissance to create a distinction between public and private selves. Maus used the example of the description of Aeneas in Sir Philip Sidney's *Defense of Poetry* which differentiates between his 'inward self' and his 'outward government.'[9] In contrast, Debora Shuger stated that 'the modern meaning of the self as an autonomous, unique individuality possessing a continuous internal awareness is not available in the Renaissance', arguing instead that people viewed the self as a 'generic nature' that was shared by all.[10] Since the 1990s, literary criticism's focus has shifted away from debates predicated on a definite divide between the public and private spheres. Instead, since the early 2000s there has been a renewed emphasis placed on the interactions between the public and private sphere. This is in part an effect of the renewed focus on female agency and the increasing acknowledgement in scholarly work of the interactions between the domestic and the public sphere.

However, the period's fascination with the workings of the mind, experience and the role these aspects played in the creation of the individual remains evident in the philosophical, physiological and poetic texts of the day. In fact, the eighteenth-century understanding of personal identity is widely agreed by scholars to crystallize in John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* which argues that individual experience underpins the understanding of the self. Stephen D. Cox neatly summarises the centrality of Locke's role

[8] Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 13.
[9] Katharine E. Maus, *Inwardness and the Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 3.
[10] Debora K. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 232-233.

when he states that Locke 'placed the whole question of perception, and the mind's sensibility to what it perceives, at the heart of eighteenth-century attempts to determine the nature of self.'[11] For Locke, all knowledge originated from the perception of external objects: from reflection and sensation. In fact, it was Descartes' and Locke's ground-breaking seventeenth-century philosophy that sparked a new and vigorous interest in the investigation of one's own inward mental states.[12]

Interestingly, Ann Radcliffe's early novels mirror Locke's prioritization of the self as a perceiving, sensing organ. In *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* and *A Sicilian Romance* Radcliffe presents visual experience and the development of life experience and wisdom as one. For example, in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* when describing the hero Radcliffe emphasises his inexperience as a style of observation: 'When we first enter on the theatre of the world, and begin to notice that objects that surround us, young imagination heightens at every scene'.[13] This description of youthful innocence echoes Locke's model of the phases of development beginning with the 'tabula rasa'. Radcliffe further emphasises the distinction between the inexperienced and experienced spectator when she states: 'We are led reluctantly to truth through the paths of experience…Here an altered scene appears;—frowns where late were smiles; deep shades where late was sunshine.'[14] Similarly, in *A Sicilian Romance* the heroine, Julia, is initially over-awed by the splendor of courtly celebrations: 'Julia surveyed the scene from an obscure window; and as the triumphal strains filled the air, her head throbbed; her heart beat quick with joy, and she lost her apprehensions from the marchioness in a sort of wild delight hitherto unknown to her.'[15] However, once Radcliffe's heroine has experienced deception and disappointment her way of looking

[11] Stephen D. Cox, "*The Stranger Within Thee": Concepts of the Self in Late-Eighteenth Century Literature* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2009), p. 13.
[12] Udo Thiel, 'Hume's Notion of Consciousness and Reflection in Context', *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 29/2 (1994), pp.75-115.
[13] Ann Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 4.
[14] Ibid.p.4.
[15] Ann Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.14.

changes: ‘Pleasure had withdrawn her beam from the prospect, and the objects no longer illumined by her ray, became dark and colourless.’ [16] For Radcliffe, the process of growing up and gaining experience is not only described in visual terminology, the experience of the self is the experience of the sensing, feeling observer. Furthermore, the lack of parental influence over these phases of development suggests Radcliffe viewed them as natural and organic. In *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* the hero’s mother, Matilda, fears the life experience her children will be exposed to and yet resigns herself to a lack of control: ‘Impressions would soon be formed which would stamp their destiny for life.’[17] Radcliffe’s understanding of perception as central to experience is established in these first two novels and then further demonstrated in her later novels. Throughout these texts Radcliffe focuses closely not only on her character’s perceptual experiences but also on the role these experiences play in their moral development.[18]

Radcliffe’s suggestion that perception contributes to the constitution of the individual subject reflects the developing interest in the working of the mind that was characteristic of the eighteenth century. However, this is not to suggest that the concept of the individual or character was not one of debate in the period. As Deidre Lynch points out in her study *The Economy of Character*, ‘The word “character” encompasses a range of meanings such as “giving a character” by writing a letter of recommendation or giving testimony in court and the classical notion of characters as “types”.’[19] As many critics have pointed out and Lynch re-emphasizes, the Greek origin of the word ‘character’ is derived from a sense of inscribing onto a surface, denoting either a ‘brand’ or ‘stamp’ or the instrument that produces brands and stamps. Lynch uses the example of the imprint made on a coin and argues that during

[16] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.28.
[17] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.5.
[18] For further discussion of the morality of the spectator in Radcliffe’s fiction consult Fiona Price, '"Myself Creating What I Saw": The Morality of the Spectator in Eighteenth-Century Gothic', *Gothic Studies*, 8/2 (2006), pp.1-17.
[19] Deidre Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 67.

the eighteenth century, a culture increasingly dependent on print, the term was also closely linked with the printing press.

While later conceptions of the term 'character' came to signify the deep moral nature of the individual, something essential to his or her constitution, this is not necessarily central to eighteenth-century fictional characters. Before characters were 'psychologised', the types of characters dominating print culture in the first half of the eighteenth-century were adapted to 'typographical culture' where 'communication was a matter of marking, imprinting, and embodying' or in the case of the English tradition of Theophrastan character sketches, characters were developed as examples of personality traits intended to function as moral exemplars.[20] Consequently, the concern was not with inner meanings but rather semiotic systems of signs which envisioned 'character' as either a system of signs or moral example. Lynch states that 'Writers of the first part of the eighteenth century seem eager to understand faces less as natural facts and more as signs, prototypical reading matter.'[21]

It was E.M. Forster in *Aspects of the Novel* who most famously articulated a binary opposition between 'flat' and 'round' characterisation. Flat characters, according to Forster, showed little development from the beginning to the end of the work. However, if the character was round, gradual changes occurred and the personality of the character evolved. In further defining 'round' and 'flat' characters, Forster suggested that round characters were capable of living beyond the requirements of the text.[22]

Scholarly focus on Gothic texts did not thrive under Forster's framework. In 1958, Robert Heilman divided Gothic into two categories depending on their relation between surface and depth as the 'old' and the 'new' Gothic. According to Heilman, old Gothic 'took the easy way' and relied on setting and plot mechanisms or 'decor and stage-set' to generate energy

[20] Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture and the Business of Inner Meaning*, p. 28.
[21] Ibid.p.34.
[22] E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (London: Penguin, 2005).

and excitement. In contrast, the 'new' Gothic typified by Charlotte Brontë did not need to rely on setting to create an effect: 'an original, intense exploration of feeling that increases the range and depth of fiction.'[23] It was at this time that psychoanalysis was also beginning to provide a popular approach to Gothic texts, typified by Kelly Hurley's statement that the Gothic invented the systematic discourse of the irrational. Hurley argued that the Gothic was a narrative mode that preceded Freud's definition of the unconscious.[24] Structural and thematic elements such as repetition and the uncanny as well as the oedipal plots often explored in the texts reinforced the connections made between psychoanalysis and Gothic fiction. Lowry Nelson argued that the self was located in the 'true depths' of the Gothic novel reinforcing the critical preoccupation with the concept of depth and its link to the individual and the psyche.[25] Traditional psychoanalytical criticism had emphasised and endowed these texts with a 'depth' that belied their surface conventions. However, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's 1980 study reconsidered this binary and argued that for Gothic texts the 'strongest energies inhered in the surface.'[26] Sedgwick identified a range of thematic and structural conventions such as 'live burial' and the 'unspeakable' that unified disparate texts and functioned as part of a semiotic system of signification. Sedgwick used a post-structuralist approach to deconstruct the binary of surface and depth and yet retained an interest in the psychoanalytic repression of sexual energy.

However, the renewed post-structuralist interest in Gothic texts and the psychoanalytical claims for the 'depth' of Gothic novels did not successfully erase the remnants of twentieth-century critical values which prioritized realism as the primary characteristic of a serious novel. As Deirdre Lynch has argued, it is through the claim to psychological and social

[23] Robert B. Heilman, 'Charlotte Bronte's "New" Gothic', in Robert Rathburn and Martin Steinmann (eds.), *From Jane Austen to Joseph Conrad* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958), p. 27.
[24] Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin De Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 6.
[25] Lowry Nelson, 'Night Thoughts on the Gothic Novel', *The Yale Review*, 52 (1962), p. 238.
[26] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (New York: Arno Press, 1980), p.12.

mimesis that the novel became a subject of serious academic interest.[27] The character stands centre-stage in the attempt of the serious 'literary' novel to reflect the psychological and social realm. Consequently, Radcliffe's novels were often neglected by critics as a result of this bias towards the realist tradition of characterisation.

A wide range of critics have commented upon the generic qualities of the hero and heroine in Gothic novels. For example, Elizabeth Napier in *The Failure of Gothic* comments on the two-dimensionality of Gothic characters. The key to Napier's evaluation is her call for psychological depth and complexity in characterisation. She complains that 'Characters in the Gothic are often....so highly generalised or idealised that no truly individual portraits emerge at all' whereas any previous 'mixed' figures are 'flattened' in order to conform to the imperative of the resolution.[28] Napier's comments echo similar criticism targeted at Radcliffe's fiction specifically. For example, Robert Kiely argued that in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the character Emily is puppet-like and emerges from her captivity without having learned, grown or developed.[29] When compared to the Forster binary of 'flat' and 'round' characters, Radcliffe's are overwhelmingly described as 'flat'.

However, in the last fifteen years there has been a renewed scholarly focus on the importance and subtleties of Ann Radcliffe's characterisation. In 1998 Diane Hoeveler's influential *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalisation of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* re-imagined the Gothic heroine in line with feminist theories and argued that the Gothic heroine enacted a performance of 'passive femininity' at times manipulative and subversive. Hoeveler argued that 'victim feminism', the manipulation and creation of a cultivated pose of passiveness and 'staged weakness', was developed as a method to negotiate an oppressive social and political world. This ideology of female power through

[27] Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture and the Business of Inner Meaning*, p.13.
[28] Elizabeth Napier, *The Failure of Gothic: Problems of Disjunction in an Eighteenth Century Literary Form* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1987), p. 90.
[29] Robert Kiely, *The Romantic Novel in England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972).

staged weakness is what Hoeveler calls 'Gothic feminism'.[30] Focusing on Ann Radcliffe and a range of Gothic novelists her analysis highlighted a seldom acknowledged complexity in Radcliffe's characterisations: the subtle ambivalences and contradictions. Hoeveler's influence can be seen in Ada Sharpe's recent exploration of the ways in which Radcliffe's heroines engage with the material work of art objects as a way of disrupting gendered hierarchies.[31] Furthermore, Charlie Bondhus' analysis of the heroine's use of the sublime as a tool of gender division and empowerment considers the delicate balance enacted between subversion and support of patriarchal ideas. Both of these articles take characterisation in Ann Radcliffe's novels seriously yet still primarily use her texts as a vehicle through which to analyse aspects of culture or theory. [32]

Recent and influential survey studies of character in the eighteenth century have, however, been less interested in maintaining a sustained focus on Radcliffe's characters. Out of David Brewer's *The Afterlife of Character, 1726-1825*, Catherine Gallagher's *Nobody's Story,* Alex Woloch's *The One vs. The Many* and Deirdre Lynch's *The Economy of Character,* only Lynch considers the example of Radcliffe's characters in her study. However, even in Lynch's study Radcliffe remains a marginal example. Lynch outlines a clear progression of three different stages in the novel: from the typographical to the novel of manners, culminating in the realist and psychological novels of Austen. She argues that Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Charlotte Smith and Maria Edgeworth are experts at 'drawing character' and representing subjectivity; however, Lynch only focuses on Austen and Burney. This replicates the trend in literary critical models towards realist novels, which she

[30] Diane Long Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press,1998).
[31] Ada Sharpe, 'Orphan, Embroiderer, Insect, Queen: The "Elegant and Ingenious" Art of Being Ellena in Radcliffe's *The Italia*n (1796)', *European Romantic Review*, 23/2 (2012), pp.123-40.
[32] Charlie Bondhus, 'Sublime Patriarchs and the Problems of the New Middle Class in Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian*', *Gothic Studies*, 12/1 (2010), pp.13-32.

herself decries as the reason for the neglect of earlier eighteenth-century typographical characters.

RADCLIFFE'S LANGUAGE OF PRIVATE FEELING

Jane Austen is often described as the first writer to fully realise the potential for narrative characterisation by developing a sophisticated use of free indirect discourse, or as Dorrit Cohn defines it 'narrated monologue'. However, Ann Radcliffe was also experimenting with the combination of different forms of narration in an attempt to create effective characterisation. Central to these experiments is an emphasis on sensibility and the range of descriptive techniques used to construct the sensing, nervous body and its connection with the ever watchful and curious mind. As is well known, Radcliffe's novels engage with the discourse of sensibility, and elements of her fiction encourage critics to categorise her work as 'psychological'. Sensibility, as a concept, is concerned with the relationship between body and mind. Radcliffe's engagement with this discourse reveals the central role the mind, the body and their overlap have in her texts.

Radcliffe attempts to construct a thorough portrait of the mind across her five published novels; in particular she focuses on the alternation between the different mental states a character experiences. The mental states she explores include: the mind at rest, in pain, under extreme stress, the absorbed mind, the happy mind, the remembering mind, the fearful mind. Her novels offer an imaginatively realised version of a mind, in constant flux and motion and, as such, reflect and engage with eighteenth-century philosophies and scientific theories of the mind. Her texts reinforced a belief in the susceptibility of the mind to external impressions and internal images. Equally as important in Radcliffe's texts were the power of memory and the development of mental discipline which she refers to as 'habit' of mind. It is these aspects which aggregate to create a fictional model of mind that is both descriptive and instructive.

In the five novels published in her lifetime, Radcliffe regularly uses two of the narrative modes Dorrit Cohn discusses in *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*: quoted monologue and psycho-narration. Cohn describes quoted monologue as the technique by which the narrator directly quotes the thoughts of the character being narrated. On the other hand, psycho-narration retains the presence of the narrative voice, using narrative language to describe the mental condition of the character.[33] Quoted monologue is often used throughout Radcliffe's text when her characters recount their personal histories and also functions to position an embedded story within the larger text. In *A Sicilian Romance*, Julia's mother gives a lengthy account of her personal history in quoted monologue which also functions as an embedded narrative in the text: 'I waited in the fond expectation of seeing you again-but you appeared no more! At last I returned to my cell in an ecstasy of grief which I tremble even to remember.'[34] This lengthy quoted monologue mirrors a similar quoted monologue Madame de Menon provides at the beginning of the text and corresponds with the structural conceit of stories within stories which Radcliffe so favoured.

Radcliffe signaled a desire to present the internal thoughts and mind of her characters through repeated use of phrases such as 'This thought' and 'Her conscience whispered to her that the dislike was mutual.'[35] While she repeatedly refers to her characters' internal thoughts and feelings Radcliffe uses two main modes of narration: psycho narration and quoted monologue. Gary Kelly, in his analysis of Radcliffe's emotional taxonomy, identifies a split in narrative between the 'voice of reason' and the discourse of emotion. Kelly argues that the voice of reason and the narrator's voice are unified and serve a moral function to

[33] Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p.34.
[34] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.179.
[35] Ibid. p.74. Further examples of the phrase 'This thought' can be found in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.156; *The Romance of the Forest*, pp. 20,104, 200 and 258.

regulate emotion, ultimately dramatising the triumph of reason.[36] In his assessment Kelly captures the peculiar nature of the disjunction between the events of the plot and the narrator's voice. It is often this 'voice of reason' that dominates Radcliffe's texts.

In her introduction to the Penguin edition of *Pamela*, Margaret Doody stresses the importance of the non-existent narrator or authorial voice. For Doody, action in a novel is internal because everything in the novel comes through the narrator's consciousness.[37] Similarly, in *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader*, Keymer argues that the unique aspect of *Clarissa* in contrast to a novel such as *Tom Jones* is the absence of the author to assess the experience of the characters.[38] The critical emphasis on the invisible narrator's pivotal role in characterisation has influenced critical reception of Radcliffe's novels. Radcliffe's use of authorial assessment does, at times, dominate the narrative. However, in addition to authorial assessment Radcliffe uses a wide range of narrative techniques in an attempt to create convincing and effective characters.

Characterising Radcliffe's texts as embodying a clean split between plot and commentary, glosses over the moments in the text where these two 'voices'–reason and emotion–merge. Radcliffe is a compromised narrator who must present and dramatise extreme emotion while simultaneously evaluating these excesses in order to regulate them. This creates a dialogic tension that affects the way in which characters are presented. Radcliffe's use of psycho-narration is used not only to regulate the feelings of her characters but to locate and hold up for admiration the source of regulation within characters. For Radcliffe, the process of internalised regulation produces exemplary characters:

> She paused in silent hesitation. A sense of delicacy made her hesitate upon the decision which her heart so warmly

[36] Gary Kelly, '"A Constant Vicissitude of Interesting Passions": Ann Radcliffe's Perplexed Narratives', *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, 10/2 (1979), pp. 45-64.
[37] Margaret Anne Doody, 'Introduction' in Peter Sabor (ed.), *Pamela* (London: Penguin, 1985), p.16.
[38] Tom Keymer, *Richardson's 'Clarissa' and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

> prompted. If she fled with Hippolitus she would avoid one evil, and encounter another. She would escape the dreadful destiny awaiting her, but must, perhaps, sully the purity of that reputation, which was dearer to her than existence. In a mind like hers, exquisitely sensible of the pride of honour, this fear was able to counteract every other consideration, and to keep her intentions in a state of painful suspense. [39]

Radcliffe often focuses on the mind in the process of deliberation, torn between emotions or practical choices and considering multiple options. She demonstrates knowledge of her characters through the numerous evaluative phrases scattered throughout her texts: 'a sense of delicacy'; 'exquisitely sensible of the pride of honour'; 'her heart so warmly prompted.'[40] Radcliffe's depiction of her character's inner thoughts differs little from the key aspects of personality described in the third-person omniscient character summaries; in addition, language used to express the internal thoughts supports the initial portraits of the external narrator. As such, the 'character zone'– to use Bakhtin's term –remains strangely inert and singular; tied to the evaluative voice of the external narrator.[41] The authorial context surrounding the character, a sphere that extends beyond the boundaries of the direct discourse allotted to him, is not sufficiently dialogised. In many cases, in Radcliffe's texts, the character's voice too closely resembles the voice of the external narrator

The voice of Radcliffe's narrator is often as strong and omniscient as to be able to penetrate the thoughts and feelings of multiple characters at the same time, as demonstrated in *A Sicilian Romance:*

> To beguile the tediousness of the time they endeavoured to converse, but the minds of Emilia and Julia were too much affected by the late occurrence to wander from the subject. They compared this with the foregoing circumstance of the figure and the light which had appeared; their imaginations kindled with wild conjectures and they submitted their opinions to Madame, entreating her to inform them sincerely. [42]

[39] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance,* p.65.
[40] Ibid.pp.62-3.
[41] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays,* trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981), p.230.
[42] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance,* p.36.

Eighteenth-century reviews of Radcliffe's novels emphasise 'contrast' between characters as a key aspect of successful characterisation. In a review of *The Romance of the Forest* in the *Critical Review* (April 1792) the reviewer observes that: 'The characters are varied with skill, and often dexterously contrasted.'[43] In fact, when the two sisters in *A Sicilian Romance* stop sharing their responses and thought processes it is represented as a sign of maturation. When Julia falls in love with Hippolitus, 'Love taught her disguise. Till then Emilia had shared all her thoughts.' [44] Furthermore, in the run up to a festival held in honour of their brother, Julia is tortured by 'impatient hope' whereas Emilia experiences 'calm consideration, and almost regretted the interruption of those tranquil pleasures.' [45] Similarly, in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, Radcliffe moves from mind to mind and provides an outline of the general thoughts of various characters emphasising their differences:

> On the way, the minds of the party were variously and silently engaged. The Earl ruminated on the conduct of Alleyn, and the late scenes. Mary dwelt chiefly on the virtues of her lover, and on the dangers she had escaped; and Alleyn mused on his defeated purposes and anticipated future trials.[46]

Radcliffe's reliance on psycho-narration is taken to extreme lengths in *A Sicilian Romance* when the Duke encounters his long-lost son in the forest only to discover he is the leader of a group of banditti. The scenes that deal with the realization and confrontation between father and son are the result of the external narrator's position as perceptive observer: psycho-narration replaces dialogue entirely. The dramatic confrontation between father and son is a confrontation without dialogue and becomes oddly muted:

[43] Deborah D. Rogers, *The Critical Response to Ann Radcliffe* (London: Greenwood Press, 1994), p.21.
[44] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.21.
[45] Ibid.p.15.
[46] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.109.

> His sensations, however, on discovering his father, were not very pleasing; but proclaiming the Duke, he protected him from farther outrage.
>
> With the Duke, whose heart was a stranger to the softer affections, indignation usurped the place of parental feeling. His pride was the only passion affected by the discovery; and he had the rashness to express the indignation, which the conduct of his son had excited, in terms of unrestrained invective. [47]

While this episode demonstrates Radcliffe's confidence in the mode of psycho-narration, it remains an extreme example in her texts. What is more common across all five of Radcliffe's novels is an alternation between the confidence of the external observer as typified by psycho-narration and the presence of doubt, which occasionally creeps in to Radcliffe's narrative perspective. For example, in the same text, just as Julia is about to describe her story of escape in first-person quoted monologue, the narrative confidence slips for a moment: 'Julia paused a moment, as if to stifle her rising emotion, and then commenced her narrative.'[48] The use of the conditional clause 'as if' undermines the external narrator's position of omniscient knowledge and for a moment the character's mind remains closed and separate from the mind of the author. There are moments in the text where the interiority of a character remains inviolate from the scrutiny of the narrator and reader's eye.

Radcliffe uses an underlying structural conceit that further complicates the possibility of direct and transparent narrative. For example, in *The Italian* the main body of the text is the result of a private narrative spoken in a confessional that is subsequently made public, and 'committed to paper' by a 'student of Padua.' [49] Similarly distanced, *A Sicilian Romance* is also the product of a second-hand narrative by an unknown hand. At the beginning of the novel a curious tourist is allowed access to a manuscript kept in a convent library. The main

[47] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.65.
[48] Ibid. p.106.
[49] Ibid. p.4.

body of the text is not the transcription of the manuscript in its entirety, but rather a combination of 'abstracts of the history before me, which, with some further particulars obtained in conversation with the abate, I have arranged in the following pages.' [50]

The opening two pages of *A Sicilian Romance* function as the framing narrative for the remainder of the text, mixing first-person narrative with quoted monologue and direct speech:

> I recurred, by a natural association of ideas, to the times when these walls stood proudly in their original splendour, when the halls were the scenes of hospitality and festive magnificence, and when they resounded with the voices of those whom death had long since swept from the earth. 'Thus,' said I, 'shall the present generation—he who now sinks in misery—and he who now swims in pleasure, alike pass away and be forgotten.' My heart swelled with the reflection; and, as I turned from the scene with a sigh, I fixed my eyes upon a friar, whose venerable figure, gently bending towards the earth, formed no uninteresting object in the picture. He observed my emotion; and, as my eye met his, shook his head and pointed to the ruin. 'These walls,' said he, 'were once the seat of luxury and vice. They exhibited a singular instance of the retribution of Heaven, and were from that period forsaken, and abandoned to decay.' His words excited my curiosity, and I enquired further concerning their meaning.
> ...
> I accompanied him to the convent, and the friar introduced me to his superior, a man of an intelligent mind and benevolent heart, with whom I passed some hours in interesting conversation. I believe my sentiments pleased him; for, by his indulgence, I was permitted to take abstracts of the history before me, which, with some further particulars obtained in conversation with the abate, I have arranged in the following pages.[51]

The opening three sentences which precede this section of the framing narrative describe the scene from a disembodied third-person's perspective: 'The situation is admirably beautiful and picturesque, and the ruins have an air of ancient grandeur, which, contrasted with the present solitude of the scene, impresses the traveler with awe and curiosity.'[52] In order to explore the effect of the scenery, the passage then shifts from the present tense into the past

[50] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.2.
[51] Ibid. pp.1-2.
[52] Ibid. p.1.

tense and assumes the first-person perspective of the 'I'; the general outline of the traveller initially presented takes on a specific form. The passage then combines the narrative modes of the first-person and self-reflexive quoted monologue to suggest that the narrator speaks aloud while walking along the beach; the private and the public merge as thoughts are spoken aloud. Additionally, the quoted monologue of the first-person narrator and the reported speech of the 'venerable' friar are linked as a result of their physical closeness in the passage; consequently, the distance between the first and third-person perspective is reduced: subjective and objective are merged. Interestingly, physiognomy plays a central role in the establishment of sympathy between the narrator and the 'venerable' and interesting figure of the friar. Their conversation is initiated by the emotions on the narrator's face which interest the friar and trigger the recounting of the story. Throughout Radcliffe's texts faces are both an extension of narrative and trigger further storytelling.

On closer inspection the apparent transparency of the first-person narrative viewpoint is further complicated: the reader is given no indication of the gender of the 'I', nor whether the 'I' of the frame narrator seamlessly transitions into the third-person omniscient narrator, who begins the first chapter with the confident 'Towards the close of the sixteenth century, this castle...'[53] Radcliffe seems to invite these uncertainties through her explanation of the source of the story. The role of the curious tourist as narrator or editor is never made clear. The tourist presents him/herself as an editor when it is stated that they have 'arranged' the fragments; indeed, the friar reinforces this lack of ownership by referring to the original author of the manuscript: 'A brother of our order, a descendent of the noble house of Mazzini, collected and recorded the most striking incidents.'[54] Yet the transition from the first-person of the frame narrative to the third-person omniscient narrator in the main body of the text does not make clear the transfer of voice to the 'brother of our order.' Similarly, the

[53] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, pp.1-2.
[54] Ibid. p.3.

end of the novel reverts to the third-person perspective but not to the 'I' of the framing narrative. An inclusive third-person pronoun 'We' is now used in the narrative as the author reflects on the narrative using the phrase 'We learn.' The framing 'I' of the text is transformed from an editor 'arranging' and synthesising 'further particulars' to a reader reviewing and extracting the moral from the story: 'In reviewing this story.'[55] Consequently, the source and strength of the narrative's organising voice is diffused. In fact, this is the only ending in Radcliffe's texts where the narrator is repositioned at the end, assuming the position of the reader of the text. *The Romance of the Forest* and *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* both end with a third-person description of the romantic marriage resolution while in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the writer is presented in a de-familiarizing movement of revelation that paradoxically remains in an attenuated third-person form: 'this weak hand' of 'the writer.'[56] Finally, in *The Italian* three levels of narration are established, which include a third-person narrator referred to in the frame narrative who disappears at the end of the novel. Instead, the servant Paulo, in a textual reference to Shakespearean conventions, assumes the role of commenting and reflecting on the events of the novel.

Radcliffe's mixture of narrative modes, embedded poetry and framing devices interact in what Bakhtin defines as 'dialogic tension.'[57] While Bakhtin discussed the interaction and play of different discourses in a text he also describes a variety of different narrative perspectives, such as 'non-direct speaking' and 'quasi-direct discourse.' Examples of quasi-direct discourse are demonstrated by the third-person revelation of the writer's presence at the end of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*: 'this weak hand.'

As is well known, the Gothic novel is a medium predicated on secrets: they motivate and propel the entire narrative towards their conclusion, most commonly a revelation of mistaken

[55] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.199.
[56] Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.672.
[57] Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, p.320.

identity and parentage. However, beyond the novel's plot the text often models and instructs the reader to keep excessive emotions and feelings secret and hidden. When characters begin to lose their composure, they retreat as Alleyn does in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*. When Alleyn's plan for attack and rescue encounters problems, he 'returned to his tent to compose his mind' away from the public eyes and public judgment.[58] In *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* after the death of his wife, St. Aubert instructs his daughter in the methods of self-control:

> All excess is vicious; even that sorrow, which is amiable in its origin, becomes a selfish and unjust passion, if indulged at the expense of our duties–by our duties I mean what we owe to ourselves, as well as to others. The indulgence of excessive grief enervates the mind. [59]

As a result of this instruction St Aubert's daughter, Emily, retires to her closet to indulge her grief: 'Emily only was absent; who, overcome with the scene she had just witnessed, had retired to her closet to weep alone.'[60] Throughout *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily and her father express their grief behind closed doors. In Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, the female heroine has to hide her emotions, 'constrained to endure in silence her sorrows and injuries.'[61] Similar scenes of the heroine indulging in grief behind closed doors can be found in *The Romance of the Forest*: 'Adeline had retired to her chamber to weep.'[62]

Clearly, the push for privacy is linked to decorum and self-control; however, heroines shedding tears behind closed doors also produce narrative gaps and a textual surplus that needs to be filled by the reader. These silences are in contrast to the technique of Samuel Richardson who, according to Ian Watt, was the first major writer to emphasise both domestic life and private experience so that readers got inside the characters' 'minds as well

[58] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.70.
[59] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.18.
[60] Ibid. p.20.
[61] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.3.
[62] Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.79.

as in their houses.'[63] In contrast, throughout Radcliffe's texts, there are points at which emotion remains undisclosed; either by the chosen perspective of the author or as a failure of language. For example, in *A Sicilian Romance* Julia successfully hides from her sister and Madame de Menon her plan to escape; she leaves her sister a letter, which far from being a private confession of feeling or explanation, reveals nothing: 'Adieu, dear Emilia; never more will you see your wretched sister...'[64] The emotional component of this letter is complicated by the distancing technique Julia uses by referring to herself in the third-person. In place of explanation, the letter dramatises the role of Julia as 'wretched sister' in a pronouncement that seems designed for a public readership, a fact confirmed by the text; the letter is kept as a source of evidence and read by the Marchioness and Marquis as well as Emilia. In addition to using the epistolary form to create distance in the narrative, in *A Sicilian Romance* the choice of narrative perspective blocks access to the selfish Marchioness' emotions. When she kills herself, the narrative perspective is only able to gather facts about her movements from servant surveillance and it can only refer to intentions, emotions and feeling at this distance: 'It is probable that Maria perpetrated the fatal act soon after the dismission of her woman; for when she was found, two hours afterwards, she appeared to have been dead for some time.'[65]

The use of the third-person narrative and second hand information provided by nameless and faceless servants creates a gap in the narrative. The servants are only able to report on the physical movements of their mistress, therefore, the Marchioness' suicide remains unexplained and unexplored. Throughout Radcliffe's texts servants are presented as impressionable and susceptible to superstition; furthermore the status of the servants undermines their authority and reliability as a valid source of information about the

[63] Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, p.59 .
[64] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.72.
[65] Ibid. p.192.

Marchioness. This creates an impenetrable distance between the reader and the motivations which propel the Marchioness to commit suicide. Not only do the servants provide little information, the event itself is inconsistent with the emotions Radcliffe has already attributed to the Marchioness. The flippant reaction to her husband's accusations, which the reader is provided access to, seems inconsistent with this final act of suicide. The change in emotions and feelings is left unrecorded and Radcliffe's decision to distance her reader from this development results in a distinct narrative gap: where once the reader was allowed access to the private thoughts and feelings of the Marchioness, they are ultimately denied any real knowledge of the emotional events and changes leading up to her death.

It is not only the narrative distance created by closed doors or the insertion of poems and landscapes which prevent the reader from accessing character's thoughts and feelings. When the writer follows characters beyond these closed doors, gaining access to this private space, it does not guarantee access to private thoughts. For example, in *A Sicilian Romance*, Emilia and Julia retreat into privacy and the reader follows them: 'Julia passed the remainder of the day in her closet with Emilia.'[66]

The reader may be able to physically access the private space of Radcliffe's heroines; however, this does not guarantee access to their inner thoughts and feelings. This inaccessibility is also manifested in the use of the term 'unspeakable', a term Radcliffe uses repeatedly throughout her texts. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's analysis of the formal conventions of Gothic texts identified this trope as one of the constituent conventions of the genre. Sedgwick argued that this, in part, reflected the difficult and emotional subjects Gothic texts confronted.[67] Psychoanalytical criticism of the Gothic used this trope to reinforce an emphasis on the role of the 'unconscious' in the genre. The psychoanalytic

[66] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.60.
[67] Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*, p.15.

version of the 'unconscious' is an anachronism applied to the text from a post-Freudian perspective and allows for the injection of hidden psychological depth regardless of authorial intentions.

However, the trope of the 'unspeakable' can also be placed within the contemporary eighteenth-century framework of aesthetic theory. Considering the 'unspeakable' within this framework rescues the trope from the depths of psychoanalysis and restores it to the surfaces associated with visual art and painting.

Radcliffe uses the convention of the 'unspeakable' in a variety of situations. Experience becomes 'unspeakable' when the deep sympathy of understanding between a hero and heroine transcends language, when the heroine is presented with a vision of horror or when extreme emotion is experienced. While there are moments in which extreme joy is 'unspeakable' it is usually negative emotion that is described in this way. In Radcliffe's texts emotion often overwhelms the body rendering the character speechless. One such example occurs in *A Sicilian Romance* when the heroine's brother and lover encourage her to escape from an arranged marriage organised by a tyrannical father: 'Julia could speak but with her tears. A variety of strong and contending emotions struggled at her breast, and suppressed the power of utterance.' [68] Later in the novel, when Julia is exposed to the tyranny of another patriarchal figure, the abate, the reader follows the heroine into her chamber but is not privy to her inner thoughts: 'Julia passed the night and the next day in a state of mental torture exceeding all description.'[69] More specifically, is it the fluctuation between contrasting emotional states which paralyze not only the body of the heroine but also the author's powers of description. Radcliffe explains this several times in *A Sicilian Romance* when Cornelia is told she may marry her lover: 'the sudden transition from grief to joy was almost

[68] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.61.
[69] Ibid. p.142.

too much for my feeble frame...Let me obliterate, if possible, the impression of sensations so dreadful.'[70] When Hippolitus rescues his lover Julia:

> He flew to Julia, who now revived, but who for some time could speak only by her tears. The transitions of various and rapid sensations, which her heart experienced, and the strangely mingled emotions of joy and terror that agitated Hippolitus, can only be understood by experience. [71]

Radcliffe also uses the trope of the 'unspeakable' to respond to scenes of violence. In contrast to her contemporary Monk Lewis, Radcliffe avoids the detailed visual description of violence and death. In *A Sicilian Romance* Hippolitus and Julia escape into a room full of corpses:

> On looking round they beheld a large vault; and it is not easy to imagine their horror on discovering they were in a receptacle for the murdered bodies of the unfortunate people who had fallen into the hands of the banditti...The bodies which remained unburied were probably left either from hurry or negligence, and exhibited a spectacle too shocking for humanity. [72]

Radcliffe repeats facts concerning the physical setting of the room and location and uses vocabulary such as 'strewn', 'inclosed', 'thrown up' and 'new-made graves' to suggest the horror of the scene.[73] However, it is as though she is painting the outline of the scene in bold strokes while the details and colours are left blank. At the height of horror, in contrast to the detailed description of natural scenery, Radcliffe's passage retreats from actually describing the scene. Radcliffe uses suggestive vocabulary and reference to setting to create a detailed frame around an absence; ultimately the reader is barred full access to the scene.

Radcliffe's 'unspeakable' response to scenes of horror is in part an act of decorum and, as such, an aspect of the regulatory narrative function in Radcliffe's texts that Gary Kelly

[70] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.121.
[71] Ibid. p.164.
[72] Ibid. p.166.
[73] Ibid. p.166.

identifies.[74] However, this regulatory discourse is also indebted to aesthetic theories of painting and the sublime which in turn influenced eighteenth-century approaches to characterisation. Radcliffe's use of the 'unspeakable' as an aesthetic category is not only inspired by Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* but also by Joshua Reynolds's *Seven Discourses on Art*. .

The distinction between the general style, represented by the tradition of history painting and the particular style of the portrait were central to Joshua Reynolds' theory of art. More importantly, different values were assigned to these different aesthetic styles. The particularisation associated with the excess and desires of the commercialised portrait painting business was contrasted with the general style of history painting which was associated with civic virtue. What grew out of this association between the popular and the excessive was an emphasis on 'pictorial abstemiousness.'[75] This new–found distinction was used to separate high from low (popular) art. Peter de Bolla argues that Joshua Reynolds plays a central role in the development of this distinction, arguing for 'pictorial abstemiousness' in the name of moral instruction and civic value.[76] Reynolds encouraged artists to focus on the general rather than the particular, the ideal rather than the specific.[77] According to De Bolla, this distinction between the relative values of different styles of representation was also linked to distinctions between types of viewer, which was in turn a reaction to the increasing access and commercialisation of art. As De Bolla argues, the democratisation of art led to the need to 'create a hierarchy of images.'[78] This hierarchy of images in turn created a distinct hierarchy amongst art viewers. The lower form of art works such as portraits could be appreciated by a relatively untutored eye whereas 'high' art could

[74] Gary Kelly, '"A Constant Vicissitude of Interesting Passions'': Ann Radcliffe's Perplexed Narratives', pp.45-64
[75] Barbara Maria Stafford, '"Peculiar Marks": Lavater and the Countenance of Blemished Thought', *Art Journal*, 46/3 (1987), pp. 185-92.
[76] Peter De Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p.21.
[77] Ibid.p.24.
[78] Ibid.p.26.

only be appreciated by the expert eye of a highly educated viewer: a viewer who had been exposed to the great paintings of the Western art tradition. [79]

This divide between the general style and the particularisation of the portrait influences Radcliffe's various textual approaches to representing the thoughts and feelings of her characters. As Deirdre Lynch has highlighted, there was a contemporary concern that an excess of description would disrupt the aesthetic equilibrium. This form of descriptive excess was associated with the low-brow form of caricature and was symbolized by the image of the 'overloaded countenance.'[80] Not only does Radcliffe attempt to avoid the creation of an 'overloaded countenance' she also referred to Joshua Reynolds in her own work.

Radcliffe's transformation of the principles of the 'general' style of painting into a mode of literary description and characterisation suggests that she may have been attempting to elevate the status of Romance fiction by placing it within the framework of history and landscape painting. James Watt has referred to Radcliffe's inclusion of poetry and landscape description as integral to her favourable reception by contemporary critics and similarly suggests it aligned her texts within the hierarchy of artistic genres.[81] However, Radcliffe's pictorial aesthetic does not only apply to landscape descriptions and poetic verses, visual metaphors and the vocabulary of painting also suffuse her descriptions of the mind. Hence, in *Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* when Laura witnesses the violent treatment experienced by her mother, her feelings are described as 'tints':

> The artless efforts of Laura, to assuage the sorrows of her mother, only fixed them in her heart in deeper impression, since they gave to her mind, in stronger tints, the cruelty and oppression to which her tender years were condemned.[82]

[79] De Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p.20.
[80] Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning*, p.48.
[81] James Watt, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre, and Cultural Conflict, 1764-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 56.
[82] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* p.75.

Radcliffe's aesthetic vocabulary is inspired by Edmund Burke's treatise *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful:* 'Pleasure of every kind quickly satisfies; and when it is over, we relapse into indifference, or rather we fall into a soft tranquility, which is tinged with the agreeable colour of the former sensation.'[83] Burke's vocabulary permeates Radcliffe's descriptions and use of words such as 'tinged', 'agreeable' and 'tranquility' become bywords for mental states. Her use of Burke's aesthetic vocabulary persists across all five novels published in her lifetime. Radcliffe's use of Burke's vocabulary contributed to the already extensive use of vocabulary associated with painting which she used to describe landscapes, faces and the workings of the mind.

Compare the descriptions of landscapes to those of the expressions, emotional states and internal workings of the characters' minds in Radcliffe's texts. The comparison emphasizes the similarity of the aesthetic register Radcliffe chooses for both. Her descriptions are limited to the rhetorical structure, colouring and vocabulary of the sublime and picturesque. Again, in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* when Laura thinks about the Earl of Osbert's escape, her focus of infatuation, the change in her emotions is expressed within this pictorial rhetoric: 'This thought cast a sudden shade over her features.'[84] The metaphoric telescoping approach re-imagines internal thoughts as though they are part of external nature and compares the mind to the motions of the sky; the individual thought to the movement of the clouds. Radcliffe develops this initial descriptive concept, presented in skeletal form, in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* so that it could show contrasts between emotions in *A Sicilian Romance*: 'an exquisite emotion thrilled her heart, and she experienced one of those rare moments which illuminate life with a ray of bliss, by which the darkness of its general shade is contrasted.'[85]Again, Radcliffe uses the natural metaphor and correlates contrast in

[83] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 45.
[84] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.69.
[85] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.23.

feeling with contrast in colour: surface visual chiaroscuro is used to describe depth of feeling. Interestingly, the infinite scale of the sky is used as a metaphor to describe the interiority of the individual. This metaphoric linking of the two bestows a similar sense of the infinite on the inner workings of the mind and heart; depth and distance are collapsed.

Marshall Brown's analysis of Radcliffe's landscapes in *The Gothic Text* argues that Radcliffe's nature descriptions are a means of turning inwards and discovering the consciousness of the character.[86] However, landscape does not always function as psychological projection and where external and internal are linked in some passages, they are exchanged in others. Radcliffe inserts landscape description at crucial stages in the narrative. For example, when the Duke is passionately pursuing Julia, he depends on the information he gathers from locals to determine whether he continues his search: 'To the questions put by the Duke to the several persons he met, he received answers that encouraged him to proceed.'[87] However, instead of describing the Duke's changes in emotion during his pursuit the narrative perspective moves outwards and describes the surrounding environment instead:

> The country assumed a more civilized aspect. Corn, vineyards, olives and groves of mulberry-trees adorned the hills. The vallies, luxuriant in shade, were frequently embellished by the windings of a lucid stream, and diversified by clusters of half-seen cottages. Here the rising turrets of a monastery appeared above the thick trees with which they were surrounded; and there the savage wilds the travellers had passed, formed a bold and picturesque background to the scene.[88]

At the point in the narrative where the reader would expect to be permitted access to the internal workings of the Duke's mind – a description of the emotional reaction to the sighting of his target – we are instead presented with yet another landscape. This is

[86] Marshall Brown, *The Gothic Text* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2005), p.161.
[87] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.83.
[88] Ibid.p.83.

particularly interesting given Radcliffe's initial choice to prioritise the Duke's perspective during the pursuit section of the narrative. The mix of emotions the Duke experiences while in pursuit are described elsewhere in the text (desperate, angry) and yet Radcliffe often varies in terms of the consistency with which she depicts the internal states of her characters; she often replaces emotions (internal) with landscapes (external) creating a narrative gap that must be filled by the reader. However, the choice of landscape is often linked to the emotional state of the character and is part of Radcliffe's technique of characterisation. In order to embody the Duke's character, the landscape we are presented with is 'picturesque' and as such retains an element of control unlike that of a sublime landscape; on the other hand, contrast embodied in the close proximity between the 'rising turrets of a monastery' and the deep valleys and stream below, mirror the rapid alteration in mood of the Duke. Not only does this provide variety, one of Radcliffe's rhetorical aims, it also expresses the changes in emotion the Duke is experiencing while simultaneously distancing the reader from direct access to the Duke's thoughts. Instead of quoted monologue the reader is presented with a form of nature description that doubles as psycho-narration. Radcliffe's use of natural description could be described in a number of ways: as metaphor, pathetic fallacy and as psychological projection.[89] I would not wish to suggest that Radcliffe self-consciously used these techniques as pathetic fallacy and projection are nineteenth-century concepts. Nor, however, would I dismiss the parallels and mirroring between mind and environment as mere accidents. Instead, Radcliffe's treatment of landscape and the mind overlap, and draw inspiration from Lockean sensationalist psychology, David Hartley's theory of the association of ideas and the rhetorical models of Joseph Priestley and Edmund Burke.

[89] The narrator describes the landscape as the Duke might see it.

Marshall Brown argues that Radcliffe's nature descriptions are a means of understanding the self and only exist in terms of their subjective meaning to the viewer.[90] However, nature not only functions as a model of the mind and as an external object which impresses itself upon the mind; nature is also presented as a palliative force. For example, in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, nature affects the mind of Osbert: 'The sweet tranquillity of evening threw an air of tender melancholy over his mind.' [91] In *A Sicilian Romance*, Julia takes refuge in a convent: 'Julia, sheltered in the obscure recesses of St Augustin, endeavoured to attain a degree of that tranquillity which so strikingly characterized the scenes around her.'[92] Radcliffe not only attempts to imitate a calm found in nature in her prose but also presents her heroine using nature as a way to calm her nerves. Julia cannot sleep; she therefore opens her window and allows the sensuous sounds and sights of nature to calm her:

> The night was still, and not a breath disturbed the surface of the waters. The moon shed a mild radiance over the waves, which in gentle undulations flowed upon the sands. The scene insensibly tranquilized her spirits. A tender and pleasing melancholy diffused itself over her mind; and as she mused, she heard the dashing of distant oars.[93]

Like a medicinal draught, the sounds of nature and particularly the waves 'diffuse' over the heroine's mind. The word 'tranquil' is also used later on in the text when the 'romantic scene...excited sensations of a sweet and tranquil nature, and soothed her into a temporary forgetfulness of her sorrows.'[94]

In addition to quoted monologue and psycho-narration, Cohn defines a third narrative perspective called 'narrated monologue'. Narrated monologue is a unique blending of first- and third- person narration to describe the third-person narrative realisation of a character's thoughts: the character's unspoken (mental) discourse. It retains but reshapes the role of the

[90] Brown, *The Gothic Text*, p.77.
[91] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.39.
[92] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.116.
[93] Ibid. p.58.
[94] Ibid. p.125.

narrative voice, fusing it to the voice of a character's consciousness and allowing both voices to interact and to define themselves through and against one another. As such, narrated monologue is an interesting example of the fusion of two voices, kept separate in quoted monologue and psycho-narration. Additionally, narrated monologue is an ideal vehicle for the enactment of sympathy between narrator and character. The technique is at its most intricate when used ironically or when the narrator moves between sympathy and irony, creating a complex relationship characterised by both intimacy and distance. This is the type of narrative most commonly associated with Jane Austen. However, there are a few moments in Radcliffe's texts where the narrative voice begins to drop subtly away to prioritise the thoughts and feelings of the characters without the presence of authorial commentary and explanation.

The moments in the text where the mind and body are united in response to an external stimulus reveal the character's consciousness in a way that is often veiled by the presence of authorial assessment. The moments where the text turns inwards occur when the narrative is focused on the mind in motion or the sensual body is central to the experience narrated, creating a physiological language of interiority. For example, upon the discovery of his wife's infidelity in *A Sicilian Romance*, Radcliffe focuses on the Marquis's mind:

> He was torn by contending passions, and opposite resolutions:– now he resolved to expiate her guilt with her blood – and now he melted in all the softness of love. Vengeance and honour bade him strike to the heart which had betrayed him, and urged him instantly to the deed – when the idea of her beauty – her winning smiles – her fond endearments stole upon his fancy, and subdued his heart; he almost wept to the idea of injuring her, and in spight of appearances, pronounced her faithful. The succeeding moment plunged him again into uncertainty; his tortures acquired new vigour from cessation, and again he experienced all the phrenzy of despair. [95]

[95] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance,* p.186.

Radcliffe's repeated use of the imperative and time marker 'now', repetition of the possessive pronoun 'her' and insertion of dashes to break up short elliptical statements, creates a sense of immediacy. While not formally fulfilling the requirements of 'narrated monologue' as defined by Cohn, Radcliffe does create an intimacy between the reader and the narrated feelings of her character. The changing emotions of the characters imbue them with present-tense immediacy. In *Imagining a Self,* Patricia Meyer Spacks argues that Richardson's *Pamela* 'achieves its sincerity...by its consistent interpretation of fact through feeling.' [96] Pamela, for example, tries by writing to sort through her feelings; punctuation reveals her emotion with frequent uses of dashes, repetitions, exclamation marks. Feeling and writing are also closely linked in *Clarissa*, exemplified by Clarissa's difficulty in describing her rape; hence her use of dashes and fragmented narrative.

Similarly, when Radcliffe's characters respond to frightening external stimuli, their internal thoughts mingle with the senses and create a fragmented narrative:

> Julia was awakened by the bell of the monastery. She knew it was not the hour customary for prayer, and she listened to the sounds, which rolled through the deep silence of the fabric, with strong surprise and terror. Presently she heard the doors of several cells creak on their hinges, and the sound of quick footsteps in the passages – and through the crevices of her door she distinguished passing lights. The whispering noise of steps increased, and every person of the monastery seemed to have awakened. Her terror heightened; it occurred to her that the marquis had surrounded the abbey with his people, in the design of forcing her from her retreat; and she arose in haste, with an intention of going to the chamber of Madame de Menon, when she heard a gentle tap at the door. Her enquiry of who was there, was answered in the voice of madame, and her fears were quickly dissipated, for she learned the bell was a summons to attend a dying nun, who was going to the high altar, there to receive extreme unction. [97]

[96] Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), p.197.
[97] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.135.

Radcliffe's repetitive use of pronouns 'she' and 'her' and the combination of time connectives and a logical sequence of events (doors creaking and then footsteps) prioritise sound over vision. Additionally, the unification of the narrator and heroine's position of ignorance and confusion, as events unfold, lends the passage a sense of immediacy. Crucially, at this point in the text the narrator's evaluative commentary momentarily drops away. Consequently, the barrier weakens between reader and character: the reader becomes more involved as the action progresses. Thoughts are briefly alluded to without evaluative commentary or any summary of emotional states by the author: 'it occurred to her that this marquis had surrounded the abbey with his people, in the design of forcing her from her retreat.'[98] The foregrounding of sensual, physical action and reaction unifies the narrative voice and the heroine's voice. The third-person omniscient narrator has not disappeared; however, it becomes clear in these moments of drama and tension – when the physiological is prioritized – that it is the evaluative aspect of the narrator's voice that functions as a barrier to interior dialogue.

In *The Rise of the Novel*, Ian Watt describes Austen's place in the history of the novel as a unifier of the objective and subjective realms, represented by Fielding and Richardson. He argues that Austen is able to combine, in 'harmonious unity', the techniques of realism of presentation and assessment; these techniques represent the internal and external approaches to character.[99] Radcliffe does not use the technique of narrated monologue or free indirect discourse in the same assured way Austen does in her texts. However, at the moments where the heroine is placed in situations of stress or fear, the physiological language of the body and the senses come to the fore. It is at these moments in the text when the barrier drops between reader and character and the presence of authorial commentary disappears. With the absence of the third-person evaluative and omniscient narrator, Radcliffe begins to create a

[98] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.178.
[99] Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, p.297.

version of a physiological language of internal experience that focuses on circulation, blood flow, the 'nerves' and the senses. This physiological type of interiority is experienced through and projected upon the physiognomy. The internal thoughts of the abate in *A Sicilian Romance* reflect this:

> –She saw in his countenance the deep workings of his mind– she revolved the fate preparing for her, and stood in trembling anxiety to receive her sentence. The *Abate* considered each aggravating circumstance of the marquis's menace, and each sentence of Julia's speech; and his mind experienced that vice is not only inconsistent with virtue but with itself–for to gratify his malignity, he now discovered that it would be necessary to sacrifice his pride–
>
> ...
>
> This reflection suspended his mind in a state of torture, and he sat wrapt in gloomy silence.
> ...
>
> He listened to her pleadings in sullen stillness. But each instant now cooled the fervour of his resentment to her, and increased his desire of opposing the marquis. At length the predominant feature of his character resumed its original influence, and overcame the workings of subordinate passion. [100]

The appeal of physiognomy was that it made psychological study such as mental ability, emotional experience, and behaviour not only comprehensible but accessible. Physiognomy functioned as a system designed to instruct an individual to translate their instinctive responses to other people's appearances into a practical and expertise knowledge.[101] The subjective experience of internal thoughts and objective manifestation of these internal thoughts on the surface of the meaningful face and body, felt through and reflected upon the body, became a version of narrated monologue in Radcliffe's texts. Whereas earlier eighteenth-century novels may have utilised the first-person narrative or an epistolary technique, a variety of different approaches to narrative voice are seen in Radcliffe's texts. Through a consistent and repetitive focus on the face, the heroine's way of looking and

[100] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.133.
[101] Lucy Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.78.

perspective are aligned with the narrator's in its attempts to enter another's consciousness, perpetually absorbing the thoughts of those around her.

RE-WRITING ANN RADCLIFFE'S CHARACTERS

As has been well documented, Ann Radcliffe's novels were very popular during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The re-imaginings of Radcliffe's stories during her own lifetime is evidence of their popularity. Analysis of these contemporary re-imaginings also reflects the contemporary response to her characters. For example, James Boaden adapted the plot of Radcliffe's *The Italian* for the stage, turning it into a play called *The Italian Monk: A Play in Three Acts* which was performed at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket on August 15th, 1797. The play was printed by Radcliffe's own printers G. G. and J. Robinson. In the play soliloquies were presented to the audience in an attempt to explore the internal workings of the characters' minds. Interestingly, the play retained the embedded poetry of the original novel and transformed them into the songs of the chorus and the fisherwoman, Fioresca. Crucially, however, Boaden's version of Radcliffe's novel re-imagined the ending so that Schedoni is revealed to be Ellena's real father instead of her uncle reinforcing the impression given by contemporary reviews that Schedoni was a highly popular character.

In 1803, two anonymous editions of Radcliffe's novels were published. The new versions re-imagined *A Sicilian Romance* and *The Italian* and were called *The Southern Tower or the Conjugal Sacrifice* and *The Midnight Assassin or Confession of the Monk Rinaldi*. Both versions are greatly reduced in length at only 69 pages long and remained faithful to the story-line of the originals. However, these anonymous versions removed the descriptive passages and the embedded poetry. Instead, they focused on evaluative passages which explored the habits, feelings and emotions of characters. Similarly, the anonymous versions

retained the physiognomic descriptions of the original. The face remained an accurate indicator of the internal workings of the mind (See Appendix, 3).

Interestingly, these anonymous versions of Radcliffe's texts were also illustrated with a single scene from each story. Until the 1823 editions of Radcliffe's texts the illustrations created to accompany her novels focused on story scenes and the main characters. In addition to bathing the face of the heroine in a hagiographic white light, the illustrations focus on the heroine's face as she closely evaluates and observes the other characters in the scene (See Appendix 2).

CHAPTER TWO: THE FACE

INTRODUCTION

The first section of this chapter will consider the nature and rise of the discourse of physiognomy in Great Britain before the publication of Johann Caspar Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy.* Secondly, it will look more closely at the methodology and concepts Lavater advocated in his *Essays on Physiognomy* and consider some of the potential methodological challenges inherent in the discourse of physiognomy and the corresponding reception attending its publication in 1775. The second section of this chapter will consider the use of physiognomy in the work of Ann Radcliffe through an analysis of her descriptions of characters' appearances and a close reading of key sections across the five Gothic novels: *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne, A Sicilian Romance, The Romance of the Forest, The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian.* Finally, the chapter will conclude by considering some connections between a physiognomic discourse and the concept of 'character'.

PHYSIOGNOMY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

The physiognomic idea is simple and in many ways consolatory. The practice of physiognomy relies upon an optimistic belief that the human eye can be trained to see a transcendent 'truth' hidden behind the everyday appearances of things. This method of seeing prioritised the quick, intuitive ability to discriminate between faces and calmed a growing social anxiety about class mobility and foreigners; its practical application meant it affected the individual and their response to the environment. As such, physiognomy played a role in the philosophical, political and social debates that consumed the energies and interests of the eighteenth century. During the eighteenth century the discourse of physiognomy was also considered in relation to the question of man's place in nature; whether or not the individual was accountable to natural law formed the centre of the debate.

While given new import owing to the types of philosophical and scientific questions being asked in the eighteenth century, the discourse of physiognomy has a long history including the classical tradition of Aristotle. Physiognomy remained a subject of debate throughout the succeeding centuries producing the seventeenth-century manifestos of Giovanni Battista dell Porta and Charles Le Brun. These texts provided the source material for the resurgence of physiognomy in the eighteenth century while Aristotle's *Physiognomica* was still frequently referenced by writers in the period: 'The soul and body appropriate to the same kind always go together, and this shows that a specific body involves a specific mental character.'[102]

However, the classical antecedents of physiognomy were also used to question its validity and reliability. Addison's 1711 essay in number 86 of the *Spectator* questions the truth of physiognomic vision as he recounts the encounter between Socrates and Zopyrus, in which Zopyrus 'reads' the famous philosopher's face as a face stamped by dissipate inclinations.[103]Addison reinforces this anecdote by an equivocation of his own, stating that: 'I think we may be better known by our looks than by our words, and that a man's speech is much more easily disguised than his countenance.' [104] He qualifies this statement by arguing caution: 'a wise man should be particularly cautious how he gives credit to a man's outward appearance.'[105] Finally, Addison celebrates the story of Socrates and argues against the underlining determinism of physiognomy by remarking: 'I think nothing can be more glorious than for a man to give the lie to his face, and to be an honest, just, good-natured man, in spite of all those marks and signatures which nature seems to have set upon him for the contrary.'[106]

[102] Aristotle, *The Complete Works*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p.96.
[103] Joseph Addison, 'The Spectator No.86, June 8, 1711' in *17th-18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers Online*, Gale, last accessed 3rd February 2013, <http://gdc.gale.com/products/17th-and-18th-century-burney-collection-newspapers/ >.
[104] Ibid. p.399.
[105] Ibid. p.401.
[106] Ibid. p.400.

The physician James Parsons approached these philosophical questions in terms of physiognomy and produced one of the most comprehensive analyses of facial muscles of its day and 'the first sustained English medical treatise on the passions' through two lectures delivered at the Royal Society in 1746.[107] He departed from Descartes' explanation of the animal spirits and described the physical manifestation of the passions as a result of the muscles which were 'the true Agents of every Passion of the Mind.'[108]

The lectures Parsons presented were focused on the face and specifically: the forehead, eyelids, eyes, nose, lips and cheeks. As Lucy Hartley and others have already observed, the most important contribution made by Parsons' lectures was the powerful role he attributed to the nervous system and the muscles in the production of facial expressions. Parsons described the production of facial expressions as involving 'nervous Communications' between the nervous system, the nerves and the muscles of the face. In Parsons' theory of the mind-body relation, the nervous system and the muscles were linked to the 'will'; therefore the mind and body were connected and worked in tandem with each other. Lucy Hartley has emphasized the novelty of Parsons' theories by stating: 'to claim that muscular action was directly related to mental processes, and that this relationship was repeated so often it became habitual, was more consistent with the physiological principles of the second half of the eighteenth century than with its physiognomic ideals.'[109] Parsons' idea that the mind was dependent on physical structures was daring and remained a source of heated debate throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. Additionally, his insistence that muscular action became habitual provides a clear link with future conceptions of pathognomy and the literary convention of the 'stamped' countenance.

[107] Melissa Percival, *The Appearance of Character: Physiognomy and Facial Expression in Eighteenth-Century France* (London: W.S. Maney and Son, for the Modern Humanities Research Association, MHRA Texts and Dissertations, 1999), p.33.
[108] James Parsons, *Human Physiognomy Explain'd: In the Crounian Lectures on Muscular Motion for the Year MDCCXLVI* (London: Printed for C. Davis, Printer to the Royal Society, 1747), p.2.
[109] Lucy Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.17.

In the previous chapter the physiological character of emotion and its role in Ann Radcliffe's characterisation was beginning to emerge. The experiences of the hero and heroine agitate and distress their nervous bodies to such an extent that they imagine various noises, visions or collapse into unconsciousness. For example, in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, Matilda's body is unable to sustain her in her agony:

> Her mind, at length exhausted with excess of feeling, was now fallen into a state of cold and silent despair; she became insensible to the objects around her, almost to the sense of her own sufferings, and the voice, and the proposal of her daughter, scarcely awakened her powers of perception.[110]

The interaction between the mind and the body of Radcliffe's characters is clear. The experience and the expression of emotion are unified and cannot be contained within the confines of the face; instead Matilda's feelings expand across her whole body to every nerve ending. The scholar George Rousseau was one of the first critics to describe this characteristic of eighteenth-century prose. He analyzed the impact of physiological and anatomical works such as Parsons on wider culture and specifically the ways in which the discussions of the nerves created new ways to describe emotional experience.[111] Throughout Radcliffe's texts she seems to be attempting to describe emotional experiences through the nerves of her heroines. She utilizes a vocabulary that emphasizes the body's central role in the experience of emotion. For example, often Radcliffe's heroines' 'nerves shook.' while words such as 'dilated' are repeated across her novels and phrases such as, 'his heart dilated with joy'.[112] As such, she participates in the 'discursive connective tissue' created by figures like Parsons.[113]

[110] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.45.
[111] George S. Rousseau, *Nervous Acts: Essays on Literature, Culture and Sensibility* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.56.
[112] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.157.
[113] The concept of culture as a 'discursive connective tissue' is George Rousseau's idea as stated in *Nervous Acts: Essays on Literature, Culture and Sensibility*, p.15.

While the body and mind are linked through the medium of the nerves and the muscles the relation between mind and body remained problematic. According to Lucy Hartley the reason physiognomy was not able to become a 'science of mind' proper is because it was unable to 'construct a model of mind which explained the correlation of mental and physical activity.'[114] However, the need for a scientific model of causation was reduced by the theological inclination of most physiognomic theories. As a philosophy, physiognomy was influenced by an Enlightenment approach to semiotics.[115] Within this tradition as John Lyon has stated 'The Enlightenment semiotic ideal of natural signs is readable only to the physiognomist.'[116] Lyon also reinforces the need for education and practice when he states that according to this semiotic approach the body appears 'arbitrary to the uneducated eye.' Consequently, a physiognomist like Lavater emphasises the role of practice needed to transform the body, a system of arbitrary signs, into something meaningful. While these theories bring the body and mind closer together, ultimately the material body remains a barrier to the revelation of the signified: the face of God.

Similarly, Parsons' philosophy of physiognomy retained a theological framework by highlighting the role of the soul; the soul remained the centre around which the nervous system, muscles and facial expressions orbited. [117] Additionally, Parsons' lectures also have a clear moral purpose and he focused on the face's reflection of individual moral dispositions, and the requisite need for control and 'Self-Preservation'. It was because of this moral interpretation of physical facial features and expression that physiognomic observation and the commentary derived from it began to resemble a tool of surveillance.

[114] Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.18.
[115] Corinna Wagner, 'The Dream of a Transparent Body: Identity, Science and the Gothic Novel', *Gothic Studies*, 14/1, (2012), pp.74-92.
[116] John Lyon, '"The Science of Sciences": Replication and Reproduction in Lavater's *Physiognomics*', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 40/2 (2007), p. 267.
[117] Lucy Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.16.

As Lucy Hartley has stated, Parsons' emphasis on physiology reflects the discussions about human nature that were emerging in the eighteenth century.[118] His lectures, which were initially aimed to guide the painters' understandings of expression, were greatly influential not only in terms of art theory –Parsons was a close friend of Hogarth–but they also anticipated the importance of nerves and sensations in the later eighteenth century and, in particular, the theories of David Hartley.[119]

David Hartley's idea of the human body as a musical instrument is also mirrored by Radcliffe's treatment of her heroines' emotional responses to the world. When heroes/heroines experience grief, fear, joy or the beauty of nature their bodies are described as vibrating from the impressions of these external objects. When the villainous Count Santmorin in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbay*ne states he would like his subjects to blot him from their memory: 'he concluded the sentence with a groan, which vibrated upon the hearts of all present.'[120] Radcliffe's vocabulary echoes Hartley's own model of mind, an account which is based on the capacity of the nervous system to respond to stimuli through a series of vibrations transmitted through the body and associated in the mind to produce certain ideas.[121] The nervous system is central to Hartley's theories and, as Karl Figlio has observed, functions as a 'bridge between the mind and body.'[122] Hartley's interest in and identification of the 'bridge' is significant as it collapses the dualism and separation of mind and body established by Descartes. Furthermore, it mirrors Radcliffe's own presentation of the workings of the mind which highlighted the physiological nature of emotional reaction.

[118] Lucy Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.16.
[119] Shearer West, 'Polemic and the Passions: Dr James Parsons' *Human Physiognomy Explained* and Hogarth's Aspirations for British History Painting', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 13/1 (1990), pp.73-89.
[120] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.107.
[121] David Hartley, *Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty and his Expectations* (London: S. Richardson, 1749), p.27.
[122] Karl Figlio 'Theories of Perception and the Physiology of Mind in the Late Eighteenth Century', *History of Science*, 12 (1975), pp. 177-212.

PHYSIOGNOMY IN THE BRITISH NOVEL BEFORE 1775

The use of physiognomy in the mid-eighteenth century British novel continued, in the tradition established by Addison, to test the veracity of physiognomic principles in the course of its narratives. The novelists of this period were unsure of the reliability of the body as a mirror of mind, soul or character and yet remained enthralled and tantalized by the prospect of transparency physiognomy offered.

At this point it is important to draw a distinction between the literary portrait and the physiognomic portrait. The introduction of a character was literary portraiture's prime purpose. However, it was not always achieved through attention to physical detail. For example, in Defoe's *Moll Flanders* the heroine's face is not described once in the course of the whole novel. During the early to mid-eighteenth century principal characters were often introduced in the context of their familial lineage, or from a biographical perspective which summarized life events. When attention to physical detail occurred it often took the form of a generic taxonomy. In Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* Mr. Glanville wittily summarizes the conventional approach to literary portraiture in the early eighteenth century:

> When we have run over the Catalogue of Charms, and mentioned fine Eyes, fine Hair, delicate Complexion, regular Features and an elegant Shape, we can only add a few Epithets more, such as Lovely, Dangerous, Inchanting, Irresistible and the like; and everything that can be said of Beauty is exhausted.[123]

Lennox's note of sarcasm underlines the way in which the eighteenth-century literary portrait had become the product of highly stylized conventions which rendered it in many ways meaningless. Physiognomic theory promised to add depth to this 'catalogue of charms' satirized in *The Female Quixote*. Through physiognomy the features that had been catalogued in earlier portraits as arbitrary signs take on a new and meaningful significance.

[123] Charlotte Lennox, *The Female Quixote: or, The Adventures of Arabella* (Dublin: printed for J. Smith, 1752), p.149.

As such, the increased attention to meaningful physiognomic detail in late eighteenth-century novels signals a move away from the earlier eighteenth-century tradition of literary portraiture.

The increased attention to the meaning of the countenance during the early to mid-eighteenth century meant that a wide range of authors engaged with physiognomy in their narratives. Juliet McMaster argues that the discourse of physiognomy is central to the novel of the era, so much so that it produced a new plot convention: the mis-read face.[124] This new plot convention placed the focus squarely on the act of reading and epistemology.

For example, Henry Fielding constantly engages with physiognomy as an epistemological and aesthetic tool. However, throughout his narratives both verbal and visual evidence are demonstrated as unreliable modes of knowledge. In his novels, gullible characters are often physiognomists led astray by the appearance of the face; but in his *Essay on the Knowledge and Characters of Men,* Fielding sounds a different note and concedes that faces can, in fact, reveal aspects of character. In the *Essay* Fielding states that: 'Nature gives us as sure symptoms of the disease of the Mind as she doth of those of the Body'.[125] While Fielding remains anxious, concerned about the power of the hypocrite, this does not stop him from offering his own physiognomic advice concerning judgement of appearance and how to decode false appearances. Within Fielding's philosophy a 'constant, settled, glavering, sneering Smile in the countenance' indicates a false attempt to appear good whereas in contrast an:

> ...amiable, open, composed, cheerful Aspect, which is the Result of a good Conscience, and the Emanation of a good Heart; of both which it is an infallible Symptom; and may be the more depended on, as it cannot, I believe, be counterfeited,

[124] Juliet McMaster, *Reading the Body in the Eighteenth Century Novel* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 51-52.
[125] Henry Fielding, 'An Essay on the Knowledge of Characters of Men', in *Miscellanies by Henry Fielding, Esq* ed. Henry Knight Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

> with any reasonable Resemblance, by the nicest Powers of Art.[126]

Fielding concludes in his *Essay* that 'Nature doth really imprint sufficient Marks in the Countenance, to inform an accurate and discerning Eye which is the property of a few.' [127]

This phrase the 'discerning Eye' is key for Fielding and distinguishes between types of observers; a process of classification and comparison between types of observers that permeates the discourse of physiognomy. While Fielding believes in the expert observer, he does not believe this is what is popularly categorised under the term 'physiognomist'. 'The true Symptoms being finer, and less glaring [than the 'monstrous over-done Grimaces' of a farcical actor] make no Impression on our Physiognomist; while the grosser Appearances of Affectation are sure to attract his Eye and deceive his judgement.'[128]

In contrast to Fielding, Laurence Sterne does not waver and instead clearly stated that he did not believe in physiognomy. In fact, he distrusted the body as a source of truth and in *Tristram Shandy* declared that 'Our minds shine not through the body'.[129] Nonetheless, he initially desires transparency, wishing for a *Momus's glass* which would provide direct visual access to the secret motions of the heart:

> …had the said glass been there set up, nothing more would have been wanting, in order to have taken a man's character, but to have....look'd in, –view'd the soul stark naked;... –watched her loose in her frisks, her gambols, her capricios; and after some notice of her more solemn deportment... –then taken your pen and ink and set down nothing but what you had seen... [130]

[126] Fielding, 'An Essay on the Knowledge of Characters of Men', p.160.
[127] Ibid. p.161.
[128] Ibid. p.162.
[129] Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd., 1996), p. 52.
[130] Ibid. p. 51.

JOHANN CASPAR LAVATER'S *ESSAYS ON PHYSIOGNOMY*

The philosophy of physiognomy had been a topic of much debate throughout the eighteenth century. In 1775 Johann Caspar Lavater's publication of his *Essays on Physiognomy* further increased the contemporary interest in physiognomy and the debates surrounding its reliability. Lavater's *Essays* was a collection of observations and aphorisms expounding his belief that the essence of character can be physiognomically interpreted. Lavater defined the term physiognomy as, 'the science or knowledge of the correspondence between the external and internal man, the visible superficies and the invisible contents.'[131] He argued that man's essence could be known as long as his actions, gestures, and expressions could be observed. Lavater's conception of human nature was an essentialist one and provided an explanation of character that prioritised what was apparent as a source of meaningful knowledge.

Through physiognomy one could arrive at a definition of the individual that traced their inner soul or being onto their external appearance. Lavater's presentation of physiognomy prioritized the way in which physiognomy could contribute to an understanding of society. Lavater seems to imply that our interactions with others are based on instinctive yet meaningful reactions to surface appearances. He argued that we often make decisions based on these instinctive judgments without considering the reasons for doing so. Thus, physiognomy attempted to explain the range of human beings' instinctive responses to each other while also demonstrating the meaningful nature of these responses.

It has been well documented by Lucy Hartley and others that Lavater's understanding of physiognomy was indebted to the work of Charles LeBrun in the seventeenth century whose 1648 lecture on expression was entitled *Conference sur l'expression generale et peculiere*.

[131] Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind* (London: John Murray; H. Hunter, D. D. and T. Holloway, 1789), p.19.

Le Brun's detailed description of the interaction between the body, spirit and brain reveals the invisible life of the spirits as visible within the workings of the material body:

> An action is nothing else but the movement of some part and this movement can be effected only by an alteration in the muscles, while the muscles are moved only by the intervention of the nerves, which bind the parts of the body and pass through them. The nerves work only by the spirits which are contained in the cavities of the brain, and the brain received the spirits only from the blood which passes continuously through the heart, which heats it and rarefies it in such a way that is produces a thin air or spirit, which rises to the brain and fills its cavities.[132]

While the 'spirit' is carried through the blood, Le Brun still conceived of the mind as separate from the physical, organic world. Le Bruns' 'spirit' rises like a cloud of inspiration and fills the structural frame of the brain. The material and spirit touch, however, the body remains a skeletal supporting structure. His description demonstrates the links between the physiological and the spiritual and a clear hierarchy is maintained whereby the material body supports the spiritual. The body functions as a channel through which the 'thin air' of the spirit (the invisible life of the mind made visible) is conducted.

In contrast to Lavater's emphasis on empirical evidence and the role of the 'expert' observer, Le Brun's theories emerged from a deductive method of reasoning. According to Lucy Hartley, Le Brun's methodology consisted of making correlations between expressions of the face (muscular action) and the passion or emotion which caused it.[133] For example, for Le Brun, the eyebrows (slope of the eyes) were the most meaningful and expressive of the facial features. Jennifer Montagu highlights, in her analysis of his theories, that Le Brun

[132] Jennifer Montagu, 'Le Brun's Lecture on Expression', in *The Expression of the Passions:The Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun's "Conference Sur L'expression Generale Et Particuliere"* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p.126.
[133] Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.22.

believed each individual had a 'dominant sign or facial feature that revealed their character, based on the a priori fact of the existence of the soul.'[134]

Le Brun believed that 'an emotion is primarily the product of the mind and causes a reaction in the body, the nature of which is dependent on self-preservation.' [135] Le Brun continues by describing the process that connects the body to mind:

> First, a passion is a movement of the sensitive part of the soul, which is designed to pursue that which the soul thinks to be for its good, or to avoid that which it believes to be hurtful to itself. Ordinarily, anything which causes a passion in the soul produces some action in the body. [136]

It was Descartes who introduced the idea of 'reflex' as a means to connect the soul and body; however, debates about the voluntary nature of these reflex actions remained contentious throughout the nineteenth century.[137]

Le Brun's description of the soul's ability to differentiate between what is 'for its good' and what is 'hurtful to itself' provides a means through which expression can inform moral behaviour. This connection between physiognomy and moral conduct is also evident in Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy.* In his *Essays* Lavater presented an individual's physiognomy as the manifestation of their morality. Lavater's understanding and definition of morality was dependent on his Christian beliefs while the practice of physiognomy drew on theological notions harmonious with the metaphysical aspects of Descartes' philosophy. The theological framework of Lavater's physiognomic approach is clear and this religious enthusiasm is reflected in the repeated apostrophes to a higher order and the repetitive use of

[134] Montagu, 'Le Brun's Lecture on Expression', p.128.
[135] Ibid. p.125.
[136] Ibid. p.126.
[137] Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.26.

the phrase: 'God created man in his own image' throughout the work both as an epigraph and inserted within the text.[138]

Clearly, then, Lavater's model of mind is heavily reliant on the idea of a higher order. It takes as a given that the mind is the reflection of a higher being. In contrast to Parsons' physiological emphasis, in both LeBrun and Lavater's philosophies the face (external) is a mirror reflection of the mind (internal), which was, in turn, man's spiritual centre and determined his character:

> Does the Human face, that mirror of the Deity, that master-piece of the visible creation, present no appearance of the cause and effect, no relation between the exterior and interior, the visible and invisible, the cause, and what it produces? To attack the truth of the Physiognomy, is, in effect, to maintain this absurdity. [139]

Lavater's description of the clarity of physiognomic truth takes for granted the theological framework within which he places man and his relation to nature. As he states simply in the *Essays*, physiognomy is the 'immediate knowledge of man.'[140] Such is the transparent nature of physiognomy –Lavater argues –that the visible signs of inner self display themselves in a multiplicity of ways: Physiological physiognomy, Anatomical physiognomy, Constitutional physiognomy, Medical physiognomy, Moral and Intellectual physiognomy. Lavater's description of the multiple facets of physiognomic exploration not only emphasise the range and breadth of physiognomy, as he conceived it, but also reflect Lavater's attempt to define physiognomy precisely. In so doing, he attempts to articulate a physiognomic methodology that is grounded in a scientific as well as theological framework. Lavater argues that physiognomy:

> …bears the name of science. As well as Physics,-for it is a branch of Natural Philosophy. As well as Medicine, for it

[138] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.4.
[139] Ibid.p.29.
[140] Ibid.p.15.

> constitutes a part of that Science. What would Medicine be without the knowledge of Symptoms; and what were symptomatical knowledge without physiognomy? As well as Theology, for it belongs to the providence of Theology. What is it, in effect, that conducts us to the Deity, if it be not the knowledge of Man? And how do we attain the knowledge of Man, but by his face and form? As well as Mathematics, for it is connected with the science of calculation, since it measures and ascertains curves and magnitude, with its relations, known and unknown. [141]

While Lavater is at pains to advocate the scientific aspects of physiognomy, his approach to the physical world utilized two contradictory aspects of observation: instinctual and empirical. His theories prioritized observation in a way that Le Brun's earlier lectures did not, thus reflecting the growing strength of empiricism in the later eighteenth century. Furthermore, the role intuition plays in Lavater's theories did not exclude it from the scientific realm as the role of intuition within science was itself the subject of debate in the eighteenth century. However, Lavater's empirical and scientific framework ultimately encases a series of intuitions about the mind, an 'instinctive understanding of the purposes and properties of things.'[142] Additionally, the theological framework, central to Lavater's physiognomic discourse, meant that these observations were ultimately indirect and second hand.

The physiognomic method emphasized discrimination and classification and provided a viable method for Lavater's taxonomic ideal whereby the population could be categorised based on facial recognition. There is also a clear hierarchy established by Lavater between the various types of faces and the 'character' and moral dispositions they reflect; in *Essays on Physiognomy* that hierarchy begins to be articulated as a system of social stratification. As Hartley has observed, Lavater's methodological approach was based on an essentialist model of mind; consequently, all faces should be divided into separate categories based on

[141] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.90.
[142] Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.31.

their possession of common features. Using an 'inductive method' Lavater then interpreted the object of his analysis in terms of a higher order of being or God. The speculative or 'inductive' method of physiognomy allowed the physiognomist to step beyond the known facts in nature and contemplate a higher being. The appeal of the inductive method of reasoning was that it allowed particular observations to represent general types and universal principles.

Observation, curiosity and the ability to make thoughtful discriminations between objects were vital to the physiognomic process. According to Lavater, these abilities were also what separated man from other objects and animals. Through the capacity of the human mind, Lavater assigns man a privileged position: 'To know-to desire-to act (observe and meditate) to perceive –to wish– To possess the power of motion and of resistance –These combined, constitute man an animal, intellectual, and moral being.'[143]

Practically, the methodology Lavater promotes in the *Essays* can be broken down into two levels: the primary level of observation and the secondary level of organising this visual information. At the primary level, Lavater considers the process of observation as challenging and emphasises repeatedly throughout the essays the importance of 'study' and the re-reading of the object of observation:

> Precision in observation is the very soul of physiognomy. The physiognomist must possess a most delicate, swift, certain, most extensive spirit of observation. To observe is to be attentive, so as to fix the mind on a particular object, which it selects, or may select, for consideration, from a number of surrounding objects. To be attentive is to consider some one particular object, exclusively of all others, and to analyse, consequently, to distinguish its peculiarities. To observe, to be attentive, to distinguish what is familiar, what dissimilar, to discover proportion and disproportion, is the office of the understanding.[144]

[143] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, pp.10-11.
[144] Ibid.p.119.

The role of the observer is both aggressive, intrusive and yet, there is an element of passivity, which Lavater also emphasises in an attempt to avoid over-interpretation:

> Those who have this sense, this feeling, call it which you please, will attribute that only and nothing more to each countenance which it is capable of receiving. They will consider each according to its kind, and will as little seek to add a heterogeneous character as a heterogeneous nose to the face. Such will only unfold what nature is capable of receiving.[145]

In the opening sections of his *Essays* Lavater describes his evolution as a physiognomist in terms of his developing perception of difference. He states that when painting portraits of friends he began to notice patterns of similarities and differences between faces. Futhermore, he emphasises the number of portraits he painted during his early days as a physiognomist: the concept of quantity represents the idea of a training process where practice leads to expertise. In fact, it is from this sense of the difficulty of observation that the motivation to write the *Essays* stems as Lavater argues for the need of a 'standard of seeing' in which norms and conventions are established to guide the process of observation.

According to Lavater, a process of comparison and classification must follow physiognomic observation and this involved the separation of habitual from accidental expressions. The ability to make subtle discriminations between facial clues was central to the method of observation: by seeing differences in the faces of people, the physiognomist is able to 'see order amidst confusion and glean some kind of human understanding from that which appears (at first sight) to be commonplace – the ordinary occurrences of everyday life.'[146] However, in addition to the emphasis on the need for detailed discriminatory observation, Lavater also divides the 'character' of man into three larger classes: animal, intellectual and moral:

[145] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.101.
[146] Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p.37.

> The intellectual life, as being the most exalted would have its seat in the head, and the eye would be its focus. Again, the face is the representative or summary of all the three divisions. The forehead, down to the eye-brows, the mirror of intelligence: the nose and cheeks, the mirror of the moral life: The mouth and chin, the mirror of the animal life; while the eye would be the centre and summary of the whole. But it cannot be too often repeated, that these three lives, diffusing themselves through the whole body, manifest themselves in every part by their proper expression. [147]

The link between anatomy and morality is clear: the mouth and chin represented animal life; the nose and cheeks represented the moral life and the forehead and eyebrows reflected the intellectual life of the person observed. There is a clear hierarchy established between the three types of 'character' and this is translated into a universal division between higher and lower beings.

Lavater does not present his own physiognomic analysis until seventy pages into the first volume of the *Essays* when he guides the reader through a series of physiognomic questions that structure their observation of the face. He presents five profiles and then guides the reader through a five-staged series of questions about the face. He analyses the forehead (outline, situation, obliquity), the eyes (under contour of the upper eyelid) followed by the nose (angles formed by the exterior contour of the point of the nose). Finally, he considers the upper lip and the chin. Not only does this first case study replicate the hierarchy of description and classification, it also represents Lavater's attempt to create the 'standards of seeing' and norms for observation that underpin the physiognomic process. While Lavater attempts to train and focus the eye of the physiognomist on precise features, he does not underestimate the parallel importance of considering the face as a harmonised whole:

> The whole countenance when impassioned, is a harmonised, combined expression of the present state of mind. Consequently, frequent repetitions of the same state of mind, impress upon every part of the countenance, durable traits of deformity, or beauty. Often repeated states of mind give

[147] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.18.

> hability. Habits are derived from propensities, and generate passions. [148]

In the 'the air of the face' the accretion over time of the behaviour and actions of an individual become permanent and the face is 'stamped' with durable expressions which are in turn representative of their essential character.[149] Lavater emphasises the social utility of his theory of physiognomy stating that: 'Man is destined to live with his fellow-creatures, and the knowledge of Man is the Soul of Society: it is this which renders it useful and agreeable, and to a certain degree, it is indispensably necessary to every individual.'[150] He argues that physiognomic practice is good for society in that it encourages men to admire the good qualities of their neighbours and to aspire to beauty and virtue. Consequently, he presents his *Essays* as a guide to conduct: 'It is our guide, and the rule of our conduct, from the cradle to the coffin'. [151] He further summarises the various ways in which physiognomy is useful not only as the 'daily guide of every man' but also because it extends knowledge and helps man to moderate his faculties. Finally, and most importantly, physiognomy is part of instinctual human nature; according to Lavater, the desire to judge, classify and interpret the faces of others is part of human nature's instinct to acquire knowledge.

However, the concept of the face 'stamped' by excessive emotions or the effects of immoral action had important social repercussions and the potential for misuse became a subject of contention. In his *Essays* Lavater confronts these criticisms directly:

> others declare against Physiognomy, from real goodness of heart and with the purest intention. They believe, and not altogether without reason, that most men would employ it to the disadvantage of their fellow creatures. They foresee that many hasty and unjust decisions may be pronounced by ignorant and wicked men.[152]

[148] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.182.
[149] Ibid. p.21.
[150] Ibid. p. 67.
[151] Ibid.pp.32-33.
[152] Ibid. p.38.

He develops his argument in favour of the benevolence of physiognomy by stating that those that criticise physiognomy fear its truth: 'many are hostile to this Science from the dread of its light.' He continues to state dramatically, 'that almost every bad man is its adversary.'[153] Throughout Lavater's texts, the chiaroscuro imagery of light and darkness is a corollary for good and evil; furthermore, he describes transparency as a moral imperative and as a necessary step towards social perfection.

THE RECEPTION OF LAVATER'S PHYSIOGNOMY

In England, Lavater's theories began to be known from the time *The Monthly Review* in 1775 announced the publication of volume I of the original *Fragmente* stating that it 'has been expected with impatience by all who are initiated, or desirous of being so, in the secret of *reading* faces.'[154] After its initial success in German, the French translation of Johann Caspar Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* in the 1780s introduced it to a still wider audience. This edition was often reviewed in both the French and English periodicals and led to the two English editions in the 1780s. During the 1790s twelve English versions were presented in five different translations. As this summary suggests, the *Essays on Physiognomy* were a publishing success. As John Graham comments, 'the book was reprinted, abridged, summarized, pirated, parodied, imitated, and reviewed so often that it is difficult to imagine how a literate person of the time could have failed to have some general knowledge of the man and his theories.'[155] Graham's comments echo those of the nineteenth-century biographer M. Samuel who states that the term physiognomy was 'too universally known to require enumeration.'[156] Furthermore, in an 1801 edition of *The Gentleman's Magazine* it is remarked that:

[153] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, pp.39-40.
[154] John Graham, 'Lavater's Physiognomy in England', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 22/4 (1961), pp.561-572.
[155] Ibid. p.32.
[156] Graeme Tytler, *Physiognomy in the European Novel* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982), p.122.

> A servant would, at one time, scarcely be hired until the descriptions and engravings of Lavater had been consulted, in careful comparison with the lines and features of the young man or woman's countenance.[157]

Similarly, a nineteenth-century encyclopedia entry describes the effects of Lavater's physiognomy in apocalyptic terms: 'in many places, where the study of human character from the face became epidemic, the people went masked through the street.'[158] By 1810, there had been sixteen German, fifteen French, two American, one Dutch, one Italian, and no less than twenty English versions of Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy*. Unsurprisingly, when Lavater visited England in 1791 he was a celebrity. Maria Edgeworth's correspondence reflects this when she writes: 'Lavater is to come home in a coach to-day. My father seems to think much the same of him that you did when you saw him abroad, that to some genius he adds a good deal of the mountebank.'[159]

However, Lavater's version of physiognomy, for all its outstanding success, set limits on the way in which bodies were viewed. Amateur physiognomists became collectors of curiosities roaming the streets looking for perfect or unusual physiognomic portraits to record and analyse. Furthermore, artists and writers were also absorbing the theories of expression and facial structure that Lavater promoted.[160] By the end of the century, character description in novels had become infused with physiognomical descriptions inspired by Lavaterian rules of physiognomy.

[157] Graham, 'Lavater's Physiognomy in England', p.561.
[158] Ibid. pp.561-2.
[159] Tytler, *Physiognomy in the European Novel*, p.56.
[160] Lavater recommended that the amateur physiognomist collected or made sketches of people interesting physiognomies. See: Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.100.

PHYSIOGNOMY AND CHARACTER

The use of physiognomic codes in a literary work centres on the idea of character: what constitutes the character and the division between the internal 'truth' of character and the external appearance of character. A concern with 'character' is embedded in Lavater's *Essays* and in Radcliffe's novels. For Lavater, the countenance was the crystallisation of the nature of an individual's character. Expression was the index to the mind, which was also the spiritual core and a determinant of each individuals' character. Similarly, Radcliffe uses the physiognomic code to construct characters in which the face is linked to the soul and these in turn are linked to their narrative fate.

The word 'character' also has a scientific definition that emphasises the essentialist process of investigation in which the properties of an organism are investigated. For Lavater this means an interest in how the individual is 'characterised' and its 'characteristic' properties. In terms of physiognomy these 'characteristic' properties are the facial features: the nose, the eyebrows, mouth. Similarly, in order to fulfill their narrative function, Radcliffe's heroines and villains must have the properties particular to their kind. These properties become the defining features, the 'essence' of the more general types of the heroine, hero and villain.

The physiognomic method of observation is inherently novelistic as its main purpose is to make things characterful. The physiognomist looks at a fellow human being in order to comprehend 'the character peculiar to its nature and essence.'[161] This mode of vision reinforces the role of the body as system of arbitrary signs made meaningful by the hermeneutic interpretation of the physiognomist:

> There is no object in nature the properties and powers of which can be manifest to us in any other manner than by such external appearances as affect the senses. By these all beings are characterised. They are the foundations of all human knowledge. Man must wander in the darkest ignorance, equally with respect

[161] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.34.

> to himself and the objects that surround him, did he not become acquainted with their properties and powers by the aid of externals; and had not each object a character peculiar to its nature and essence, which acquaints us with what it is, and enables us to distinguish it from what it is not. [162]

Lavater's light imagery echoes the imagery used to dramatise epistemological uncertainty in Radcliffe's novels. The physiognomist mirrors the Gothic heroine as she wanders through dark castle passageways. Both Lavater and Radcliffe present the code of physiognomy as a method of shedding light on this darkness which is also a metaphor for the unknowable interiority of others.

Lavater's ambitious aim was to decode the entire 'divine alphabet' of physiognomy in order to reveal the truth of the body. In pursuit of this ultimate transcription he emphasized the importance of reading and re-reading the human body. Ludmilla Jordanova has highlighted the fundamental role given to 'inference' by eighteenth-century physiognomic theories stating that all theories regardless of their differences agreed that 'the human body gave rise to signifiers which systematically led to the signified.'[163]

THE PHYSIOGNOMIC COUNTENANCE IN ANN RADCLIFFE'S GOTHIC NOVELS

In Lavater's first volume of *Essays* he describes a face of particular interest: 'eyes full of fire, a look rapid as lightning,' reminiscent of the convention of the villain's face in Radcliffe's Gothic novels. Indeed, it is possible to read many eighteenth-century novels as taking part in a debate about physiognomy. In fact, in the later novels of Ann Radcliffe, the veracity of physiognomic codes is a subject of direct debate.[164]

In Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* Clara's meddling Aunt is exasperated by her sympathy and generosity towards a stranger: 'Shall I never persuade you to give up that

[162] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind,* pp.11-12.
[163] Ludmilla Jordanova, 'The Art and Science of Seeing in Medicine: Physiognomy 1780–1820', in W. F. Bynum and Roy Porter (eds.), *Medicine and the Five Senses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 122–33.
[164] McMaster, *Reading the Body in the Eighteenth Century Novel,* p.45.

romantic notion of judging people by their faces.'[165] Whereas in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the gullible Madame Cheron, who disastrously marries a villainous Marquis, mocks the heroine and her father's reliance on physiognomy as a mode of character assessment:

> 'O! that is no recommendation at all,' replied her aunt, with her usual readiness upon this topic; 'he took such strange fancies to people! He was always judging persons by their countenances, and was continually deceived.' 'Yet it was but now, madam, that you judged me guilty by my countenance,' said Emily, with a design of reproving Madame Cheron, to which she was induced by this disrespectful mention of her father.[166]

Later on in the text Madame Cheron again complains about the heroine's father: 'He was always so much influenced by people's countenances; now I, for my part, have no notion of this, it is all ridiculous enthusiasm. What has a man's face to do with his character?'[167] As these direct references demonstrate Radcliffe was clearly aware of the debates surrounding the popularity of the physiognomic discipline.[168] In addition to being literate and middle-class the Radcliffe household would have been particularly receptive to intellectual trends and fashions as William Radcliffe was a journalist and editor of the *English Chronicle*. *The Monthly Review*, which was the first periodical to refer to Lavater, also produced reviews of Radcliffe's novels from the publication of *A Sicilian Romance* in 1790 onwards.

In her descriptions of character, Ann Radcliffe still refers to the corporeal features of her subjects in a similar way to earlier stylised literary portraits. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* Emily scrutinises her love interest, Valancourt:

> Emily still gazed on his countenance, examining its features, but she knew not where to detect the charm that captivated her attention, and inspired sentiments of such love and pity. Dark brown hair played carelessly along the open forehead, the nose was rather inclined to aquiline; the lips spoke in a smile; but it was a melancholy one; the eyes were blue and were directed upwards with an expression of peculiar meekness, while the

[165] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.81.
[166] Ibid. p.203.
[167] Ibid.pp.111-112.
[168] Gregory 'Monk' Lewis was a known subscriber to the first English edition of Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy*.

> soft cloud of the brow spoke of the fine sensibility of the temper. [169]

However, in a significant departure from previous literary presentations of character Radcliffe's descriptions betray a belief that an individual's physiognomy reveals the essence of their character. In addition to taking a general physiognomic approach, Radcliffe's heroines display an analytical interest in the physiognomic meaning of specific parts of the face. Emily's observations anatomise the face, the hair, forehead, nose, lips, eyes and brow all communicating some aspect of the character as a whole. Therefore, Emily's observations adhere to the physiognomic practice, outlined by Johann Caspar Lavater:

> ...the nose [indicates] taste, sensibility, and feeling; the lips mildness and anger, love and hatred; the chin, the degree and species of sensuality; the neck, combined with its hinder part, and position, the flexibility, contraction, or frank sincerity of the character; the crown of the head, not so much the power, as the richness, of the understanding.[170]

In addition to the study of the facial features, Lavaterean physiognomic principles also identified a person's hair as a valuable index to their interiority. Emily's physiognomic observations detail the way in which Valancourt's hair 'plays carelessly' along his forehead. This suggests a certain waywardness and this specific physiognomic cue is developed later on in the text when Valancourt succumbs to the pleasures of Paris. Radcliffe's physiognomic descriptions accurately prepare the reader, as well as indicate to the observer in the novel, the role the character will play in the development of the plot.

At the beginning of the *Essays on Physiognomy* Lavater distinguishes between the two terms physiognomy and pathognomy. He states that: 'Physiognomy, therefore, teaches the Knowledge of character at rest; and pathognomy of character in motion.' [171] In the *Essays*

[169] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* p.123.
[170] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind,* p.194.
[171] Ibid.p.19.

these two aspects of observation overlap and both the physiognomy and pathognomy of the object of physiognomic analysis are analysed and explored. Radcliffe also incorporates an awareness of both pathognomy and physiognomy in her literary portraits. In *A Sicilian Romance*:

> The figure of Julia was light and graceful –her step was airy– her mein animated, and her smile enchanting. Her eyes were dark, and full of fire, but tempered with modest sweetness. Her features were finely tuned –every laughing grace played around her mouth, and her countenance quickly discovered all the various emotions of her soul. [172]

The attention given to the movement of pathognomic facial expression firmly separates this literary portrait from the static taxonomic nature of early eighteenth-century literary portraits. Additionally, this physiognomic portrait is notable for its departure from a sole focus on the face; the heroine's entire body including 'mein' is described according to physiognomic codes and is rendered meaningful. While foregrounding the frame of the body, its external physiognomic features also reflect the interior soul: an individual's nose eyes, brow, forehead are neither simply outside nor inside the person as a whole. Lavater's physiognomy highlights the way in which the detachable parts of the face touch the integral parts of the soul. Similarly, throughout Radcliffe's texts descriptions of characters are based on a physiognomic belief that the soul can be *read* on the human face. In *The Romance of the Forest*, published in the same year that Johann Caspar Lavater visited England, the villain Marquis de Montalt's emotions are also transparent. Upon hearing that his plot to capture the young heroine has failed, the villain's 'strong workings of his soul, which appeared in his countenance, for a while alarmed and terrified LaMotte.' [173]

The overlap between physiognomy and pathognomy evident in Radcliffe's work creates an animated quality where there had previously only been the 'painterly' finish of the literary

[172] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.6.
[173] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.238.

portrait; it also emphasises the tension between the particular and the general at the centre of Lavaterean physiognomy. To avoid becoming a taxonomist, the Lavaterean physiognomist was advised to pick out specific from accidental characteristics and in so doing segregate original and habitual expressions from accidental ones:

> There is no state of mind which is expressed by a single part of the countenance exclusively. The whole countenance, when impassioned is a harmonised, combined, expression of the present state of mind.[174]

In Radcliffe's novels, an attention to the specific aspects of the face's anatomy accompanies the belief that the face must be interpreted as a whole. Similarly, the writer Charlotte Smith also found that the anatomisation of the face was inadequate for a full physiognomic analysis. In *Desmond* the holistic nature of the physiognomic portrait is emphasised:

> …there is so much sense blended with so much sweetness in every expression of her countenance –I have often seen both separately, but, in faces, where one predominates, there is frequently a want of the other.[175]

While Radcliffe attempts to prioritise the general or 'whole' body over the specific features she utilises the physiognomic codes to distinguish between different 'types' of characters in her texts. In *The Italian* the hero Vivaldi is described by Ellena:

> He was not a figure to pass unobserved when seen, and Ellena had been struck by the spirit and dignity of his air, and by his countenance, so frank, noble, and full of that kind of expression, which announces the energies of the soul. [176]

Throughout the novels of Ann Radcliffe, the physiognomic portraits of the hero prioritise the characteristics of grace, manliness, nobility, and dignity. In Radcliffe's first novel *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, the hero Osbert is described as having a heart that 'glowed

[174] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.14.
[175] Charlotte Smith, *Desmond* (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1792), p.35.
[176] Ann Radcliffe, *The Italian* (London: Penguin Classics, 2000), p.14.

with all the warmth of benevolence.'[177] In comparison, the heroine is characterised by sweetness and delicacy. Radcliffe's heroes and heroines in all of her texts share a similar face and general physiognomy. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* Emily, who resembles her mother, has 'the same delicacy of features, the same blue eyes, full of tender sweetness.'[178] This later literary portrait resembles that of the earlier female character in *A Sicilian Romance*: 'The person of Emilia was finely proportioned. Her complexion was fair, her hair flaxen, and her dark blue eyes were full of sweet expression.'[179] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, in her 1981 essay on Gothic imagery, highlighted the cipher-like quality of Radcliffe's characters, arguing that the close resemblance between their physiognomy challenged the very 'fiction of presence'.[180]

However, this technique – whereby the generalised qualities of character description are repeated across different texts – makes sense within the context of Lavaterean physiognomy. The purpose of Lavater's *Essays* was to provide a source book enabling amateurs to decode the infinite variety of human emotion and reaction. In order to produce such a guide, a reliable set of categories and representative types of characters needed to be defined and described.[181] Like the genre of historical painting, popular during the eighteenth century, physiognomy was only considered instructive if it distilled from the range of individual variety a typical outline, a general characteristic. For example, in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily anxiously observes a portrait for the physiognomic markers that define the heroine:

> Her features were handsome and noble, full of strong expression, but had little of the captivating sweetness, that Emily had looked for, and still less of the pensive mildness she loved. It was a countenance, which spoke the language of passion, rather than that of sentiment; a haughty impatience of

[177] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.4.
[178] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.5.
[179] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.8.
[180] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, 'The Character in the Veil: Imagery of the Surface in the Gothic Novel', *PMLA*, 96/2 (1981), pp. 255-70.
[181] For a further discussion of Lavater's 'classificatory framework' see Lucy Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture*, p. 40.

> misfortune –not the placid melancholy of a spirit injured, yet resigned.[182]

Throughout the Gothic novels of Ann Radcliffe the hero and the heroine are rigidly defined by gendered physiognomic codes. Consequently, the absence of the 'typical' physiognomic cues such as 'delicacy' combined with the typically masculine features of 'nobility' provide warning signals for both the physiognomist/heroine and for the reader of the text.

The physiognomies of the villainous characters in Radcliffe's texts are constantly compared with those of the hero and heroine. Radcliffe's villains have a distinctive physiognomy, one which is based on the use of pathognomical instead of physiognomic analysis. In *The Romance of the Forest* Adeline describes the power of the villain Marquis de Montalt's countenance, 'He appeared to be about forty, but, perhaps, the spirit and fire of his countenance made the impression of time upon his features less perceptible.'[183] The passions reduce the ability of the physiognomical eye to *read* the face and consequently deny the villain the signification and subjectivity endowed by the physiognomic portraits of the hero and heroine. The *Essays on Physiognomy* emphasise the correlation between the expressions of the face and morality, 'Morally deformed states of mind have deformed expressions; consequently, if incessantly repeated they stamp durable features of deformity.'[184] By arguing that the repeated expressions of the face result in a change in structural features, Lavater states that the face is 'stamped' with either beauty or villainy. Similarly, in Radcliffe's texts, the villain's features are deformed by the passions. Schedoni in *The Italian* is an embodiment of Lavaterean theory of the 'stamped' face:

> His figure was striking, but not so from grace; it was tall, and, though extremely thin, his limbs were large and uncouth,
>
> …

[182] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p. 278.
[183] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.87.
[184] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.181.

> There was something in his physiognomy extremely singular, and that cannot easily be defined. It bore the traces of many passions, which seemed to have fixed the features they no longer animated. An habitual gloom and severity prevailed over the deep lines of his countenance… [185]

Schedoni displays the structural effects of the extreme passions. Consequently, he is immediately compared with the principle of self-control which is exhorted across Radcliffe's texts. Throughout Radcliffe's texts, characters are advised to control their emotions and it is on this basis that the heroine or hero is distinguished from the villain. Again, Radcliffe's philosophic outlook is mirrored by Lavater in his *Essays on Physiognomy* in which a similar emphasis is given to the importance of self-control:

> The moment you would improve his body and neglect his mind, the moment you would form his taste at the expense of his virtue, you contribute to render him vicious. Your efforts will then be in vain. He will become deformed. [186]

The use of physiognomic codes to create distinctions between hero, heroine and villain and between the controlled subject and the character abandoned to libidinous passions reflects a critically recognised stage in the development of the eighteenth-century bourgeois subject. Across Radcliffe's texts the heroes, heroines and villains resemble one another, and become 'types'. The 'type' is a symptom of a particular type of signification. This moral signification distinguishes the good from the evil and the structural physiognomy of the character's faces and bodies reflect this. It is the 'controlled' body of the hero and heroine which becomes dominant in both Lavater's principles of physiognomy and Ann Radcliffe's texts.

Underlining Lavater's idea of the 'essence' and properties of character is the question of value. The classificatory process encouraged by physiognomy reinforces the differences in

[185] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.43.
[186] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.202.

value given to a range of facial features. Lavater expresses this in his use of the coinage metaphor:

> In estimating the value of the coin, has he any other rule of judgment? Why does he receive one Guinea, reject a second and weigh a third? Is it not because the colour is too bright or too pale; it is not on account of the impression, the exterior, the Physiognomy of it? A Stranger presents himself to buy or to sell.What is the first thing he does? He looks at him attentively. And does not the face of the stranger enter considerably into the opinion which he forms of him? Scarce has the unknown person retired when he declares his opinion 'He has the look of an honest man,' or, 'There is something forbidding in his appearance, or else, 'something that prejudice you in his favour.' Whether this judgment be well or ill founded is of little importance: still he forms a judgment; he dare not decide, he judges not definitively, but at least he forms conjectures by reasoning from the exterior to the interior. [187]

The consequence of this philosophy can be seen in Radcliffe's text where faces are valued and distinguished in terms of their physiognomy. This is used not only to distinguish between the hero and the heroine but also to determine who can be signified in the first place. In Ann Radcliffe's texts, the servants' facelessness signifies their subordinate status in the novels and their lack of value as characters.

The treatment of the Gothic servants in Radcliffe's novels also reveals the connection between physiognomy and language in the negotiation of the power relations between servants and their masters. Throughout Radcliffe's novels, the ideas of women and servants are characterised, in the words of the Marquis Mazzini, as 'the weak and ridiculous fancies of women and servants.'[188] However, this description is continually challenged by Radcliffe. Ann Radcliffe's predecessor Horace Walpole, in his Preface to the first edition of *The Castle of Otranto*, describes the use of the servant characters as 'opposition to the principle personages,' as a conscious aesthetic strategy. Walpole goes on to say that the servant characters 'discover many passages essential to the story, which could not be well brought to

[187] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.244.
[188] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.60.

light but by their naïveté and simplicity: in particular, the womanish terror and foibles of Bianca.' [189] Radcliffe uses a similar aesthetic technique for different ends: the servant class becomes a vehicle for the comparative construction of a rational female subject.

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* Emily the heroine, represents the voice of reason:

> 'Ridiculous!' said Emily, 'you must not indulge such fancies.'
>
> 'O ma'am! They are not fancies, for aught I know; Benedetto says these dismal galleries and halls are fit for nothing but ghosts to live in; and I verily believe, if I live long in them I shall turn to one myself.'
>
> 'I hope,'said Emily, 'you will not suffer Signor Montoni to hear of these weak fears; they would highly displease him.' [190]

Emily exercises authority over her servant through the voice of reason and the threat of the male 'eye'. Emily not only manipulates her servants' fear of the master, she also invokes his invisible gaze to silence her female servant. Additionally, she also appropriates a specifically male rhetoric, using the words of the Marquis Mazzini in *A Sicilian Romance* –'ridiculous' and 'weak'– to silence her servant. The heroine's rationality and discipline are highlighted by the comparison with the servants, who are continually presented by the narrator as vulgar: 'minds of the vulgar, any species of the wonderful is received with avidity.'[191] The servant community is characterised by a culture of gossip and storytelling and Emily neither wants to share the servant's fears nor their emotions. In contrast, the critic Diane Hoeveler includes both servant and heroine in what she calls a 'woman marked culture.'[192] However, Radcliffe uses the servant as a mode of comparison to excuse her heroine from that very same 'woman marked culture' of superstition. This ambiguity towards the feminine culture of the servant also embodies a limit to the sympathy of the heroine, which according to Janet Todd betrays

[189] Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Ortranto: A Story*, in Peter Fairclough (ed.), *Three Gothic Novels* (New York: Penguin, 1983), p.60.
[190] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.232.
[191] Ibid.p.10.
[192] Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës*, p.63.

a fear of meritocracy embodied in the concept of sensibility. [193] Additionally, in *Madness and Civilisation*, Michel Foucault considers the deliberate attempts to distance the voices of rationality and irrationality during the eighteenth century. He argues that this act of estrangement is actually a reflection of their uncomfortable nearness to one another.[194] For Radcliffe, the irrationality of the servant character is too close to the real and 'explained' experience of the heroine and as such there are repeated attempts to distance the one from the other.

The facelessness of the servant characters in Radcliffe's texts is paralleled by the silencing of the servants' voices and distancing between the social classes; furthermore, this mirrors Lavater's description of physiognomy as a language. This language is transcendent and the face is for Lavater: 'the most beautiful, most eloquent of all languages, the natural language of wisdom and virtue.' [195] However, in Radcliffe's texts, the servant characters are denied access to this 'voice' and the possibility for a transcendent language. Similarly, in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault is concerned with the restraints placed on writing and speaking within culture:

> Who is speaking? Who, among the totality of speaking individuals, is accorded the right to use this sort of language…Who derives from it his own special quality, his prestige, and from whom, in return, does he receive if not the assurance, at least the presumption that what he says is true.[196]

Throughout Radcliffe's novels the linguistic and physiognomic strategies of domination overlap; attempts to silence the servant are expressed in both the look of the master and by their verbal commands for silence. The silencing look of the master is the attempt to enact dominance: 'Paulo was silenced for a while, by a significant look from his master.'[197] In *The*

[193] Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1986).
[194] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (London: Routledge, 2001), p.264.
[195] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.96.
[196] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1989), p.55.
[197] Ann Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.184.

Italian, the attempt to silence Paulo is repeated throughout the text: 'Silence,' said Vivaldi with emphasis, 'Paulo, I command you be silent.' [198]

Similarly, the absence of physiognomic description denies these characters, who are often intricately involved in Radcliffe's plotlines, a vital form of signification. Richard T. Gray, in his essay on Lavater's influence on semiotics, emphasises the importance of the physical sign, the body, as an 'indicator of some more substantial being.'[199] In Radcliffe's texts the body does not just function as a transcendental signifier but also functions as a signifier of class. In all of Radcliffe's five published novels there are two physiognomic portraits depicting the faces of the servant class. These two portraits are found in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian*. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the physiognomic portrait of Bardardine depicts a countenance deformed by a pathognomy characteristic of the Gothic villain: 'the visage beneath it shewed strong features, and a countenance furrowed with the lines of cunning and darkened by habitual discontent.'[200]

However, in contrast to the physiognomic depiction of Bardardine, Paulo, Vivaldi's loyal servant in *The Italian*, is given unusual physiognomic attention:

> His attendant, Paulo, was a true Neapolitan, shrewd, inquisitive, insinuating, adroit; possessing much of the spirit of intrigue, together with a considerable portion of humour, which displayed itself not so much in words, as in his manner and countenance, in the archness of his dark, penetrating eye, and in the exquisite adaptation of his gesture to his idea. [201]

Radcliffe's portrait of Paulo draws in part from a xenophobic tendency also found in the *Essays on Physiognomy*. Judith Welscher writes that the descriptions Lavater produced of national characters and the physiognomies of the vulgar were widely used in French journals

[198] Ann Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.414.
[199] Richard T. Gray, 'Physiognomic "Surface Hermeneutics" and the Ideological Context of German Modernism', in *About Face: German Physiognomic Thought from Lavater to Auschwitz* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004).
[200] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.396.
[201] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.86.

during the early decades of the nineteenth century. Wechsler describes this as a reflection of a need of the bourgeoisie to 'identify, and therefore somehow contain and stabilize, the shifting categories of class.'[202] However, while Radcliffe inscribes the servant's face with a restrictive resemblance to an 'exotic foreigner', the detail of this physiognomic portrait furthers the argument that physiognomic signification correlates with linguistic authority in Radcliffe's texts: to have a face in Radcliffe's texts also means to have a 'voice'. In *The Italian,* the loquacity of Paulo is a constant source of comedy; however, Paulo's permission to speak and be listened to in Radcliffe's text is also linked to the fact that he is one of the few servant characters granted a face. This facial signification grants Paulo an unusual authority in the text. For example, when Paulo and Vivaldi explore the caves Paulo takes not only the physical but also the perceptual and 'rational' lead:

> As they proceeded, Paulo observed, that the walls were stained in several places with what appeared to be blood, but prudently forbore to point this out to his master, observing the strict injunction of silence he had received.
>
> …
>
> Paulo himself seized his arm. 'Stop! Signor,' said he in a low voice. 'Do you not distinguish a figure standing yonder, in the gloom?'[203]

Additionally, Paulo is described as a figure of uncommon transparency. This image of the transparent body is prioritised in Lavater's *Essays* and presents a utopian idea. In his *Essays* Lavater presents a religious vision of the state of the body after the resurrection. After the resurrection the body will be able to communicate directly, through the re-instatement of a 'primeval language' in which the body speaks without words.[204] The ideal physiognomist is also transformed by this vision of Christian Utopia and is able to finally realise the full

[202] Judith Wechsler, *A Human Comedy: Physiognomy and Caricature in 19th Century Paris* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,1982), p.34.
[203] Radcliffe, *The Italian* , p.88.
[204] Ellis Shookman, *The Faces of Physiognomy: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Johann Caspar Lavater* (Columbia, SC: Camden House ,1993), p.25.

power of their skill: 'the most sublime gifts, which might develop only in the world to come.'[205] However, Paulo's body stands not only as an image of transparent communication but is also associated with the idealised simplicity of 'the rustic', which was beginning to become fashionable with the popularity of Rousseau's *Eloise* and the development of primitivism. In Radcliffe's journal of her journey to Holland, written immediately before the composition of *The Italian*, she records the image of a group of celebrating peasants in Holland:

> Among the group were many of Teniers' beauties; and over the countenances of the whole assemblage was an air of modesty, decorum, and tranquillity. The children left their dancing, to see us; and we had almost lost our tide to Rotterdam, by staying to see them.[206]

Radcliffe's characters are constrained by the imperatives of their physiognomy: interactions between characters are shaped by their physiognomy which is dictated by their membership of a social class.

THE PHYSIOGNOMIC EYE

In George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Dorothea develops the ability to imagine consciousnesses other than her own: her learned ability to imagine another's perspective resembles the narrator's ability to depict a character's thoughts. In Ann Radcliffe's texts, the heroines also attempt to imagine the minds of others and use physiognomic principles to shape and guide their understandings of others. The principal characters are not only the object of physiognomic description, but also utilize Lavater's principles. The way characters view the world through a precise and educated physiognomic eye reinforces the divisions made by the physiognomic eye of the author. Radcliffe's heroines often demonstrate an ability to 'read'

[205] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.96.
[206] Ann Radcliffe, *A Journey Made in the Summer of 1794, through Holland and the Western Frontier of Germany, with a Return Down the Rhine: To Which Are Added Observations During a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland* (London G. G. and J. Robinson, 1795), p.3.

the faces of other characters in the novels. The distinction between characters that use physiognomy and those that do not is explicitly referred to in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* in which the heroine notices a stranger in a crowded convent and remarks on her physiognomy:

> Ellena was so fascinated by this interesting nun, that she forgot she was describing her to a person, whose callous heart rendered her insensible to the influence of any countenance, except perhaps the commanding one of the lady abbess; and to whom, therefore, a description of the fine traits, which Ellena felt, was as unintelligible as would have been an Arabic inscription. [207]

Radcliffe's comparison of the two observers clearly draws on the discourse of sensibility: 'the callous heart' of the fellow nun is compared to what Ellena can feel when she looks at the face. The physiognomic eye in Radcliffe's texts often overlaps with sentimental vision. In *A Sicilian Romance* Madame de Menon's keen physiognomic eye also functions as an organ of empathy characteristic of a character of sensibility: 'I have seen the inward struggles of his heart, and mine has bled for him.'[208] However, this type of vision requires more than natural facility or feeling. The reference to the Arabic inscription suggests an additional requirement which, like a language, is something that must be learnt. Radcliffe suggests that the face would be unintelligible without an education in physiognomy: the specific hermeneutics needed to decode this meaningful surface. The fellow nun's inability to decode the meaning of the face reflects the deep division continued across Radcliffe's texts between the heroic and villainous mode of vision. In Radcliffe's texts the attitude the viewing subject takes towards the visual sphere defines them. Consequently, the villain's mode of vision is repeatedly contrasted with that of the heroine when looking at landscapes and at the physiognomies of others. The villain's face reveals little evidence of an interpretative or empathic mode of vision: 'the monk raised his eyes; his countenance

[207] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.123.
[208] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.31.

suffered no change, as they met those of Vivaldi.'[209] Radcliffe often describes the villain's eye as either 'fixed' and thoughtless or as consumed with passion. In *The Romance of the Forest*, the villain's process of vision is described as demonic: 'fury flashed from his eyes as they glanced upon Theodore.'[210]

In *The Italian*, the villain's mode of vision is also described as having a 'jealous eye.' [211] Not only does Radcliffe favour the steady thoughtful gaze encouraged by Burke in *A Philosophical Enquiry*, she also suggests that the villain's mode of vision is contaminated by uncontrollable passions, mirroring the face which is also marked by these excesses. When looking at the female heroine, the description of Schedoni's eyes suggests the villain is suppressing a troubling passion: 'to fix his eyes upon Ellena, and regarding her with an earnestness that seemed to partake of phrenzy.'[212]

The majority of Radcliffe's texts rely on the Gothic convention of the heroine's flight from a vile patriarch. During these travels, the heroine's physiognomic eye becomes an important survival tool in the navigation of foreign landscapes and unfamiliar social situations. For example, in *A Sicilian Romance*, both the villainous Duke and Madame de Menon search for the fleeing heroine: 'When having gained the summit of a high hill, he observed two persons travelling on horseback in the plains below. On one of them he distinguished the habiliments of a woman; and in her air he thought he discovered that of Julia.'[213] The Duke's effort of observation is emphasised as he studies the figures 'with a scrutinizing eye.'[214] However, his is not an educated eye. When he moves closer to the figure, he fails to demonstrate a physiognomic analysis of facial features, instead basing his identification on general markers such as the clothing of the figure or her 'air'. The Duke's difficulty in identification is

[209] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.48.
[210] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.34.
[211] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.97.
[212] Ibid. p.233.
[213] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.89.
[214] Ibid. p.94.

contrasted with the ease in which Madame de Menon, the heroine's guardian, identifies the heroine in the landscape. Despite her disguise, she recognises the facial features of Julia, 'Language cannot paint the sensation of Madame, when in the disguise of a peasant girl, she distinguished the features of Julia.'[215] The attention to the features of the anonymous figure instead of her 'air' or clothing, distinguish Madame de Menon as an educated observer. Madame de Menon's ability to recognise a face disguised is an example of what Lavater calls in his *Essays*, 'an acute and practiced eye.'[216] Lavater acknowledges that various disguises can conceal the inherent meaning and information encoded in the body. However, he emphasises the ability of the trained and disciplined physiognomic eye: 'To penetrate these masks and to find firm ground from which to infer essence, despite these substantial limits…The fault is not in the object but in the observer, that these tokens remain unremarked.'[217]

The Gothic landscape is full of strangers. In *The Romance of the Forest* Adeline is abandoned by an evil father and the fear of strangers is a recurrent anxiety expressed throughout the text: 'Thus was I, at this early period of my life abandoned to strangers'; 'But why abandon me to the power of strangers?'; 'Then entered another young stranger'; 'Again she was going to claim the bounty of strangers.'[218] Adeline relies on physiognomic clues to determine which stranger to rely on and which to run from and thus demonstrates the 'practised' eye described by Lavater in his *Essays.* After accepting the help of the de la Motte family, Adeline accompanies them across the country:

> The dawn...at length appeared and introduced the strangers more fully to each other. Adeline derived comfort from the looks of Madame La Motte...and thought she had seldom seen a countenance so interesting, or a form so striking. The languor of sorrow threw a melancholy grace upon her features, that appealed immediately to the heart; and there was a penetrating

[215] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.93.
[216] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.111.
[217] Ibid. p.156.
[218] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, pp.34; 45; 122 and 234.

> sweetness in her blue eye, which indicated an intelligent and amiable mind. [219]

Practically, it is the female character's ability to penetrate disguises that enables the face to remain a reliable guide to the morality of strangers and the truth of their character. The heroine's navigation of the Gothic terrain is characterised by the same anxious observations that are also seen in her encounters with the Gothic villain. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily is taken by the villain's guards to a stranger's cottage:

> Emily anxiously surveyed him. He was a tall, but not robust, peasant, of a sallow complexion, and had a shrewd and cunning eye; his countenance was not of a character to win the ready confidence of youth, and there was nothing in his manner, that might conciliate a stranger. [220]

The Gothic villain, even though adept at manipulating his facial expressions, cannot protect his face from the attentive observations of the heroine. Across Radcliffe's texts, the narrative perspective favours the viewpoint of the heroine, and, as a result, it is always the heroine's physiognomic observations that are privileged. Through the educated eye of the heroine, the villain's subjectivity is constructed; by focusing on the villain's face, his humanity is emphasised, which would have otherwise been overshadowed by descriptions of the villain's sublime stature. As an educated observer, the heroine focuses on the villain's features as they are distorted by passion. In *The Romance of the Forest,* Adeline observes the emotions of the Marquis 'and there read the tumult of his mind'; elsewhere in the text she can see 'the strong workings of his soul.'[221] The villain's expressions are focused upon and contrasted with the conduct encouraged throughout Radcliffe's novels whereby excessive passions are controlled and hidden. Her attentive facial descriptions emphasise the villain's lack of

[219] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest,* p.125.
[220] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* p.111.
[221] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest,* p.343 and p.126.

control and therefore, through the heroine's observations, the villain's construction within the text contains explicit moral judgment.

The mode of vision Radcliffe uses to frame the villain's face finds twentieth-century theoretical expression in Jean-Paul Sartre's essay 'Faces' on the artistic representation of power. Sartre stated that painters of official state portraits highlighted the semiotic markers of power whilst at the same time hiding the monarch's actual face. The common humanity of the monarch's face threatens the inviolability of his power. Sartre suggested that the painters of royalty associated flesh with weakness and therefore 'discreetly trim the flesh of the faces' and remove the ruler's expression. He stated: 'Thus it would be out of the question to remember the moving humiliating countenance of a man crushed by the burden of his office: what is painted is never fact but always pure Right.'[222] Similarly, during confrontations between the villain and the heroine in Radcliffe's Gothic novels, the submissive female's position as the object of a sublime gaze is subverted by her focus on the fact of the villain's visible emotions. Rather than 'trim the flesh' of the villain's face, the heroine magnifies it.

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily anxiously observes the villain, Count Montoni, and subjects this monarchal figure to vigorous scrutiny:

> ...he could bend these passions, wild as they were, to the cause of his interest, and generally could disguise in his countenance their opinion on his mind; but she had seen him too often, when he thought it unnecessary to conceal his nature, to be deceived on such occasions.[223]

By focusing on the eye and complexion of the stranger these physiognomic observations reduce the heroine's sense of powerlessness. In Radcliffe's texts, female propriety depends less on naivety or innocence than on an educated and experienced physiognomic eye.

[222] Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Official Portraits' in *Selected Prose: The Writings of Jean-Paul Sartre* Vol. 2, Michel Contat and Michel Rybalka (eds.), trans. Richard C. McClearly (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p.65.
[223] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.245.

However, this experienced eye is not only needed to avoid potential danger. In *The Romance of the Forest,* Adeline witnesses a stranger invading the refuge of her protectors when alone in the forest:

> She believed it impossible that a person of his appearance should be engaged in a stratagem to betray a fellow creature; and though she was destitute of a single circumstance that might assist her surmises of who he was, or what was his business in an unfrequented forest, she rejected, unconsciously, every suspicion injurious to his character.[224]

The heroine relies on physiognomic vision and her educated eye as a 'letter of recommendation' in the Gothic landscape. This conception of the utility and reliability of physiognomy was prevalent in the eighteenth century. Maria Edgeworth records in a letter to Mary Sneyd that: 'Isabella of Aragon, or Lord Chesterfield, or both, call a good countenance the best letter of recommendation.'[225]Adeline's reliance on a physiognomic instinct not only assures her of the stranger's good character but also distinguishes him as a potential future husband.

The discrete social body established by physiognomy is maintained by the cues used by Radcliffe's heroines to distinguish potential mates. Throughout Radcliffe's novels the heroine identifies her husband not only on the basis of his physiognomy but also on his use of physiognomic communication. This subtle mode of non-verbal physiognomic communication is contrasted with that of the villain. Adeline is disgusted by the Marquis de Montalt's verbal declaration of love: a 'specimen of common place verbosity, which the Marquis seemed to consider as a prelude to triumph.'[226] In contrast, Theodore and Adeline are able to communicate with 'looks of love': 'The sensibility of her heart flowed in tears from her eyes, a smile of ineffable tenderness told him all she felt. He gently pressed her

[224] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest,* p. 192.
[225] Graham, 'Lavater's Physiognomy in England', p.567.
[226] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest,* p.130.

hand, and answered her with a look of love.'[227] The lovers in Radcliffe's texts are actively searching out bodies similar to their own. Consequently, the recognition of sympathetic strangers in a threatening landscape through physiognomic cues reinforces the homogenising role of the physiognomic gaze.

In *The Italian*, the last novel published during Radcliffe's lifetime in 1797, the anxiety surrounding vision reaches a climax. Radcliffe capitalises on the association in the English imagination between the Bastille and the Spanish Inquisition to heighten this anxiety and give it a contemporary resonance. At the heart of the text is a tension between two contrasting modes of vision: the villains' and the hero/heroines'. In contrast to the physiognomic power of observation, the power of the villain is derived from his role as the object of the gaze. The specular display the villain provides for the physiognomist heroine is akin to the power of display characteristic of monarchical forms of power.

In addition to these differing modes of vision, darkness also plays a role in the text. Darkness engulfs the hero and heroine in Gothic castles or the dungeons of the Inquisition and heroines are often left to navigate the darkness of a labyrinthine castle alone. The emphasis placed on the power of physiognomic vision accentuates the vulnerability of the hero and heroine when they are unable to see or be seen. In addition to the darkness of the Inquisition and Gothic Castle, further barriers to clarity appear in *The Italian* when the heroine, Ellena, is left at the mercy of a mysterious monk called Schedoni. Throughout the text, the monk has been a figure of obscurity. Schedoni is repeatedly described as hiding behind a cowl: 'his face, half hid by his cowl.'[228] This visual obscurity is reinforced by the indeterminacy of his identity: the monk is Vivaldi's mother's confessor, believes himself to be Ellena's father and yet turns out to be her uncle. Ultimately, the monk is implicated in multiple roles in the plot

[227] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.360.
[228] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.45.

during his final confession. Schedoni's presence is shadowy, but it runs through the very fabric of the narrative. The heroine's ability to analyse facial features is tested by the figure of Schedoni while the reliability of physiognomy is called into question as Ellena tries to determine the identity of the monk. The implementation of physiognomic codes is complicated by a miniature Ellena carries around her neck supposedly depicting her father. It is Schedoni's claim that it is his image Ellena wears around her neck and he supports this claim by demonstrating an intimate knowledge of her family, facts 'which she believed were known only to Bianchi and herself.'[229]The heroine is left with competing modes of epistemological evidence: physiognomic vision, verbal testimony, and a painted miniature all compete for prominence and authority. It is important for Ellena's safety that she can accurately trace a resemblance between the miniature portrait and the real face of the terrifying monk. To this end, Schedoni is required to remove his cowl and allow Ellena to examine him:

> ...she appealed to the portrait, and endeavoured, by tracing some resemblance between it and Schedoni, to decide her doubts. The countenance of each was as different in character as in years...
>
> Schedoni, on the contrary, advanced in years, exhibited a severe physiognomy, furrowed by thought, no less than by time, and darkened by the habitual indulgence of morose passions. [230]

The act of tracing a likeness between the face of Schedoni and his portrait reflects the popular eighteenth-century appetite for tracing likeness and resemblances in the many portraits sold and exhibited throughout the period. However, the resemblance achieved by the artist of the miniature portrait in *The Italian* is erased by the philosophy of physiognomy. Lavater's *Essays* emphasise the correlation between the expressions of the face and morality: 'Morally deformed states of mind have deformed expressions; consequently, if incessantly

[229] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.276.
[230] Ibid. p.275.

repeated they stamp durable features of deformity.'[231] Schedoni in *The Italian* is an embodiment of this theory of the 'stamped' face. He displays the structural effects of extreme passions –his face has changed so much over the years that he no longer resembles the young Schedoni represented in the portrait. Consequently, Schedoni is immediately judged against the standard of self-control, which is prioritised in Radcliffe's texts; therefore Ellena's physiognomic instinct means that she struggles to accept Schedoni, who has clearly failed to control his passions.

According to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, the difference between virtue and vice is one of quantity; too little or too much of one trait results in a vice whereas a moderate balance qualifies as a virtue.[232] Most importantly, Aristotle establishes an understanding of ethics in which habits determine character. Intellectual goodness is the result of instruction and moral goodness is the result of habit; there is a link made here by Aristotle between the terms ēthos 'character' and ēthos 'custom.'[233]He goes on to compare goodness with other learnable skills, such as building houses or playing the harp; you need to repeat the appropriate actions to the point of habituation. A habit-based Aristotelian model of character is useful as a framework for understanding the Theophrastan inheritance of many eighteenth-century conceptions of character. For example, as Timothy Dykstal points out, a habit-based Aristotelian model of character provides the framework for Henry Fielding's *Amelia,* a text which favours characters who re-make themselves through habits.[234] Additionally, the Theophrastan focus on habits helped create an ethical framework for conceptualising the habit of novel-reading as a healthful, regulating force.

[231] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.222.
[232] Aristotle, *The Ethics of Aristotle: The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. J.A.K. Thomson (London: Penguin, 1976).
[233] Ibid. p.91.
[234] Timothy Dykstal, 'The Habits of Highly Effective People: Pedagogy and the Problem of *Amelia*', in Dennis Todd and Cynthia Wall (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Genre and Culture: Serious Reflections on Occasional Forms* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001).

This is an unusual position for a Radcliffe heroine. Physiognomic interpretation has previously provided an uncontested mode of knowledge and yet, when confronted with the face of Schedoni, Ellena is uncertain of her physiognomic reading. While she continues to decode the external features of the monk using the principles of Lavater, her uncertainty creates a momentary 'inability to see' the physiognomic truth on the face of Schedoni analogous to the role the darkness of the inquisition plays in the text. Ellena is repeatedly described as 'shrinking' and 'retreating' from the grim visage of the monk, who is claiming to be her father and yet she continues to study Schedoni's face. This process of examining the villain, despite the risk the heroine takes in doing so and the overwhelming fear they experience, is a recurrent pattern throughout Radcliffe's texts. Furthermore, the face of the villain regularly holds a similar interest and magnetism for the heroine as the face of the hero. When Ellena describes the face of Schedoni in *The Italian*, she uses the same vocabulary of wonder that is usually reserved for the face of the hero: 'There was something in his physiognomy extremely singular, and that cannot easily be defined.'[235] Similarly, the heroine expresses wonder when examining the features of the hero in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*: 'she knew not where to detect the charm that captivated her attention, and inspired sentiments of such love and pity.'[236]

Radcliffe's painterly eye is, in part, utilising the aesthetic principles outlined by Burke: she adds an ineffable obscurity to her portrait as though it were a veil of mist across a landscape. Radcliffe's descriptions blur the aesthetics of landscape with those of physiognomy, while the framework of physiognomy means this textual gap in description marks the transgression of a boundary clearly established between the face of the villain and hero. At moments in the text, the magnetism of the villain's face signifies a representational gap, which the physiognomic eye, functioning as an eye of power, cannot fully classify or measure. Ellena's

[235] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.125.
[236] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.34.

increased visual efforts reflect an attempt to close this textual gap and epistemological uncertainty. She 'endeavours' to 'trace' a resemblance between Schedoni's face and the portrait, repeatedly searching for the physiognomic cues his face is meant to hold. Furthermore, this moment of uncertainty underlines a crucial quality that characterises the heroine's mode of vision. While the heroine's mode of vision has functioned as a technique of power, constructing the villain as 'villainous' through a series of physiognomic cues, the heroine's efforts to decode the face of the villain also signifies a desire to understand the lack of control she explicitly judges. In part, it is the visual effort the heroine exerts that distinguishes her mode of vision from that of the villain:

> Her expressive countenance disclosed to the Confessor the course of her thoughts and of her feelings, feelings which while he condemned, he believed he perfectly comprehended, but of which, having never in any degree experienced them, he really understood nothing. The callous Schedoni, by a mistake not uncommon, especially to a mind of his order, substituted words for truths. [237]

Radcliffe's description of Schedoni's villainous mode of vision contains several observations that are emphasised throughout her texts– the viewing subject must be empathic and must not prioritise verbal evidence over visual. Most importantly, Schedoni's mistake is that he 'believes he comprehends' and therefore stops making the visual and empathic effort to imagine the perspectives of others. In contrast, the heroine's sustained visual effort to understand the villain's physiognomy is repeatedly emphasised throughout Radcliffe's texts. This emphasis on the heroine's act of looking and her effort to understand the emotions of the villain is significant in a number of ways: it is a practical strategy used by the heroine to anticipate the actions of her captors; it is also resonant of the underlying anxiety about vision and knowledge that permeates Radcliffe's novels. Finally, while the physiognomic gaze is regularly expressed as a technique of power, there are moments in Radcliffe's texts where

[237] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.233.

the heroine's mode of vision contains the possibility for a new kind of gaze. This new gaze, embodied in the heroine's curiosity, consists of an ocular exchange based upon a mutual desire to understand the other rather than control and dominate. The obsessive observations of the heroine suggest that the physiognomist's eye wants not only to define the limits and nature of the body but simultaneously to step beyond this compositional framework of physiognomy and understand the minds of others.

However, this mutual gaze remains a mere suggestion in Radcliffe's texts, an unrealised reality within the Gothic landscape. Ultimately, Radcliffe's reliance on the classifying gaze of physiognomy dominates the text with its promise of providing a solution to anxieties surrounding vision and transparency. Consequently, in *The Italian*, the possibility for wonder and curiosity about Schedoni's character ceases when he is revealed to be the heroine's uncle instead of her father:

> Nay, the very looks of Schedoni himself, more than once reminding her of his appearance on the sea-shore, renewed the impressions of alarm and even of dismay, which she had there experienced. At such moments it was scarcely possible for her to consider him as her parent, and, in spite of every late appearance, strange and unaccountable doubts began to gather on her mind. [238]

The feminist critic, Diane Hoeveler, emphasises the role of 'unconscious' sight and female 'instinct' in Ellena's reservations about Schedoni's identity.[239] The idea of 'instinct' also played an important role in *Essays on Physiognomy* while an association between a (female) instinct and the use of physiognomy highlights a tension within Lavater's own theory. Lavater, in an attempt to distance himself from the superstition associated with physiognomists of the past, places his theory within the discourse of modern empirical science by calling physiognomy, 'the science of the signs of mental powers.'[240] However,

[238] Radcliffe, *The Italian*, p.178.
[239] Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës*, p.45.
[240] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.39.

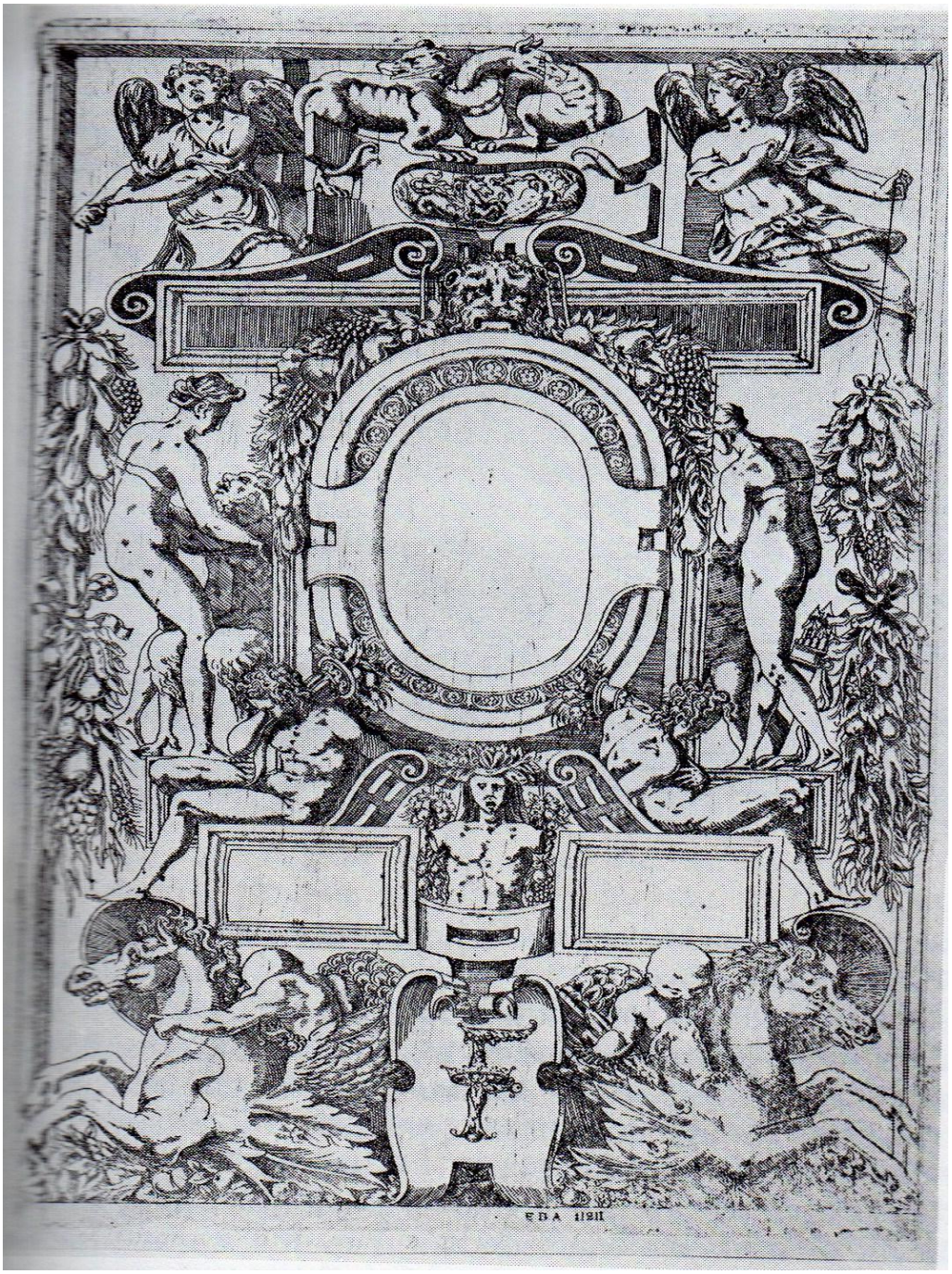
Lavater could not entirely disguise the extension of physiognomy outside of the scope of science and he acknowledges not only that there is a universal physiognomic instinct but that the female instinct is particularly perceptive in the process of recognition:

> Let a child be taken from a mother, who is not devoid of sensibility; let her but attentively observe it, for two minutes after its birth, and let it be placed among a hundred other children of the same town, or district; no matter though the inhabitants bear the most general resemblance to each other; she still would, certainly, soon select it from among the hundred. [241]

In her dramatisation of the conflict between Schedoni and Ellena, Radcliffe also suggests that her heroines have a particular female physiognomic instinct: Madame de Menon's ability to recognise the figure of the heroine in the landscape (mentioned above) is another good example of this emphasis. In Radcliffe's texts, physiognomic instinct and education compete for primacy so that the traditional distinction between an emotional response and an educated one collapse. Radcliffe privileges the emotional and sensual perception of her heroines. Their reliance on the physiognomic mode of vision enables the heroine to see with a precision and insight that combines sensibility or 'instinct' with the educated rationality of scientific objectivity. While this 'instinct' may be presented as natural, it regularly serves to support the homogenizing gaze of physiognomy. However, there are moments in Radcliffe's texts where physiognomic vision falters and the text takes a step beyond the limits of the physiognomic frame and the classifying gaze, a movement which mirrors the sublime experience.

[241] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.195.

CHAPTER THREE: THE TEXT



INTRODUCTION

The first section of this chapter will consider the role of the portrait narrative in Radcliffe's texts, exploring how the repetitive focus on portraits and miniatures reflects not only Radcliffe's preoccupation with faces but a textual engagement with the boundaries between reality and representation. Secondly, it will consider the ways in which this boundary is further challenged by the novel's structure as a whole with special emphasis given to Radcliffe's novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. The influence of models such as Thomson's heroic nature poetry and Poussin's landscape paintings on Radcliffe's treatment of the figure in the landscape will be considered. Additionally, the second section of this chapter will draw upon Derrida's arguments in *The Truth in Painting* in order to argue that the model of mind explored by Radcliffe redefines man's place in his environment and his relation to others by breaking down the barriers between internal and external. Finally, the chapter will conclude by re-considering the concept of 'character' in terms of the texture of the text as a whole. I will argue that the underlining physiognomic philosophies of Radcliffe's texts encourage an exploration of the boundaries between man and his environment, which was a central preoccupation of the eighteenth century and which has been translated into the central focus of much contemporary twenty-first-century philosophy. Finally, the anxiety associated with the concept of recognition and the uncertainty linked to the acts of looking in the text show that Radcliffe is as much concerned with the authenticity of character as with the reliability and nature of epistemology itself.

THE NOVEL'S VISUAL FIELD

Since the 1980s literary criticism that takes the visual field of the eighteenth-century novel as its focus has been dominated by the theories of Michel Foucault. Consequently, the focus has been on the links between visual modes and networks of power. Ways of seeing and observing are modes of power within Foucauldian theory and the critical focus has therefore highlighted the dynamic ways in which the visual field of the novel shapes the subject through demonstrations of exemplary behaviour. At the heart of Radcliffe's novel is a struggle for visual agency and authority which is embodied in the tension between observer and observed. In the text, this binary division created between observer and observed parallels the distinction made between the heroine and the villain: the heroine assumes the role of the observer while the villain is the subject of observation.

The ideal disembodied viewpoint, as represented by Jonathan Swift's 'prospect view' and the picturesque, presented a version of the observer isolated from society and the particular. However, this ideal of disembodied anonymous spectatorship was unsustainable in the context of public galleries, exhibitions and the rise in popular portraiture. The experience of looking at portraits or art in a gallery was a social experience. Consequently, the body of the viewer became important and the social status, identity and gender of the observer influenced the act of looking. Far from having simple access to objective truth, the observer became an object upon which a range of competing eighteenth-century discourses acted. Similarly, discourses of gender, the sublime and education acted upon Radcliffe's presentation of observers and influenced their acts of looking. The same rules applicable to the gallery visitor were applied to the heroine: exemplary visual behavior was realised through the heroine's sympathy with nature and physiognomic assessment of others. Through the narrative privileging of the heroine-observer, the moral quality of 'acts of

looking' were also confirmed. However, Radcliffe's texts do not only propound exemplary visual behaviour. Crucially, her texts also test the relation between vision and truth.

THE PORTRAIT NARRATIVE IN FICTION

Within the visual field of the eighteenth-century novel, the portrait takes a central role. Distinct from the 'literary portrait', the painted portrait depicted in literature retains its status as a visual object in the tradition of ekphrasis. In addition to contributing to the aesthetic texture of the novel, these portraits also formed an integral aspect of the narrative plot. By using the portrait to construct scenes of recognition Radcliffe was contributing to a tradition started by Eliza Haywood whose fiction focused on the discovery of long-lost characters and revealed identity.[242] For example, in Haywood's novel *Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots*, she describes the emotional effect of the portrait: 'he never pass'd by her Picture, as it hung in a Gallery in the Palace, but he stopp'd short...and burst out into the most passionate Expressions.'[243] Building upon this tradition, the portrait in eighteenth-century novels fulfilled various functions: it became an object of discovery, a concealed secret, a coveted *memento mori* or a token of affection. For example, in Sophia Lee's novel *The Recess*, the two heroines who are the undiscovered daughters of Mary, Queen of Scots, cut off from the world in a destroyed country mansion find a portrait of their mother and, although they do not know who the woman in the portrait is, it 'seemed to call forth a thousand melting sensations.'[244] The discovery of the portrait is a prompt for a long narrative sequence told by the governess and this discovery drives the remainder of the narrative as the heroines use the 'inanimate canvas' as a vehicle through which to gain knowledge of their lost mother. Lee's portrait scene, which preceded Radcliffe's publication of *A Sicilian Romance,* is mirrored in Radcliffe's own use of the portrait as plot device throughout her subsequent texts.

[242] Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning,* p.31.
[243] Eliza Haywood, *Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots: being the secret history of her life, and the real causes of all her misfortunes* (London: printed for D. Browne Junior, 1725), p.78.
[244] Sophia Lee, *The Recess; Or, A Tale of Other Times* (Dublin: Printed by the United Company of booksellers, 1790), p. 9.

The portrait became in many eighteenth-century novels an important feature if not the engine of the plot itself. Alison Conway argues that the use of the portrait signified more than a plot technique and that the 'portrait narrative' was a genre and form in itself.[245] Her claim is supported by a litany of eighteenth-century novelists who used the portrait in their texts such as Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson, Charlotte Smith and Charles Brockden-Brown.

In eighteenth-century texts portraits were often used as conversation pieces and as such played an important role in the technique of characterisation. The conversations surrounding the discussion and observation of portraits were used by authors to explore or demonstrate a character's world view, principles or opinion of other characters. For example, Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* while not an eighteenth-century text, used the portrait to embody many of the concerns of earlier eighteenth-century texts.[246] In *Belinda,* Clarence Harvey's fixation upon a young girl he finds wandering is based on her resemblance and likeness to the character of Virginia in Bernardin Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*. Harvey changes the young girl's name to Virginia and proceeds to have her portrait painted in the guise of the same fictional character. The public display of this portrait in the text not only represents the male master's control but also emphasises the pupil's loss of agency. Virginia begins to confuse fact with fiction and her own identity with that of the character her master wants her to resemble. The public display of the portrait allows it to become a conversation piece whereby characters' knowledge and world views are compared, and their understanding of implicit and underlying meaning is explored. The public display of the portrait also allows for a scene of recognition to be staged whereby Virginia's long lost father recognises his daughter. Portraits are further used to test characters' faithfulness throughout the text, as when Lady Delacour leaves a miniature of a young navy lieutenant for Virginia to find,

[245] Alison Conway, *Private Interests: Women, Portraiture, and the Visual Culture of the English Novel, 1709-1791* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), p.123.
[246] Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda* (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1994).

studying her reactions to the painted image in order to test her faithfulness. Edgeworth used the portrait as a vehicle through which to emphasise the importance of 'reading' characters and the world correctly as well as the danger of trusting appearances. In fact, the critic Joe Bray argues that the portrait is a central aspect of *Belinda*'s exploration of the distinctions between 'fiction' and 'truth' and 'generates complex debates over character and subjectivity that are crucial to the interpretation of the novel as a whole.'[247]

At the end of the century, Jane Austen continued the tradition of the portrait narrative in both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma.* Lynch argues that Elizabeth's reunion with Darcy occurs as a result of her 'reading' Darcy's portrait. Elizabeth turns 'back to look again,' and during a tour of the house, decides to take a second look at Darcy's portrait. Lynch's reading of this moment of observation in *Pride and Prejudice* emphasizes the centrality of the observer: it is the observer who determines the way in which the object of the portrait is perceived.[248] Similarly, Radcliffe's female heroines read and re-read the face of the villain and the hero in order to ascertain the integrity of their characters while the dramatic consequences of misreading are linked to the perilous positions the heroines are placed in by Gothic plots.

While portraits proved a regular focus in eighteenth-century narratives the art establishment presented the portrait as something which was difficult to understand and required expert skills of observation. Instead of providing transparency, these acts of looking,'re-reading' and the penetrating observation dramatically staged around the object of the portrait and the face also embodied the period's concern with knowledge and epistemology. Ann Radcliffe's novels follow this same tradition and in addition to the physiognomic analysis of the face, the portrait or miniature plays an important role not only in the mechanistic plots of her

[247] Joe Bray, *The Female Reader in the English Novel: From Burney to Austen* (Oxford: Routledge, 2009), p.134.
[248] Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning*, p.131.

fiction but in their textual exploration and fictional staging of the search for 'truth' and knowledge.

PORTRAITS: THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CRITICAL COMMENTARY

The purpose and value of both the portrait and the novel were topics of public debate from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. The first public art exhibition took place on the Strand, lasting for two weeks in 1760 with an estimated 20,000 visitors attending.[249] As a result of the staggering success of this exhibition, public displays of art and exhibitions became more common as private collections of art began to be displayed to the public.[250] Horace Walpole commented in 1770 that 'the rage to see exhibitions was so great, that sometimes one cannot pass through the streets where they are.'[251] However, amidst all this success the portrait also became the centre of contemporary eighteenth-century debates about consumerism and greed, the distinction between the private and public sphere, and the status of women and their relation to property and the hierarchy of art forms.

Critics remained concerned with the highly questionable status of portraiture while political and social concerns surrounding the portrait were reflected and refracted through aesthetic debates about the difference between styles of painting: history painting and portrait painting. Objections raised against the art of portraiture included the suggestion that the skill involved in portrait painting was merely mechanical. This mechanical accusation is associated with the emphasis placed on 'likeness' and with the trades that were associated with economic necessity.[252] Eighteenth-century art critics characterised the 'particular' nature of the portrait as lacking a pedagogic or moral purpose beyond the representation of

[249] De Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth Century Britain*, p.1.
[250] Ronald Paulson, *Emblem and Expression: Meaning in English Art of the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), p.323.
[251] Horace Walpole, 'Letter to Sir Horace Mann, May 6, 1770', in Peter Cuningham (ed.), *The Letters of Horace Walpole* (Echo Library, 2006), p.229.
[252] John Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt* (New Haven:Yale University Press, 1986), p.8.

one individual, the elevation of their social status and satisfaction of their vanity. In 1777, a critic for *The London Chronicle* complained that Joshua Reynolds had been forced into a career of portrait painting by the appetite of his clients for images of themselves:

> It is indeed to be lamented, that Sir Joshua Reynolds, who, by some former specimens, has demonstrated his talents as well for the historical as for other species of painting, should be confined entirely to the drawings of portraits; but such is the mean vanity and selfishness of the age, that most of our great personages would rather give two or three hundred pounds for their own dear likeness, than one half, or even one third of that sum for the noblest historical picture that ever was produced. [253]

Portraits were stained by their status as commodities and were marked by the monetary exchange that was a prerequisite of their production. Thus, the portrait as an art form became associated in eighteenth-century aesthetic debates with the greed and vanity not only of the 'mechanical' tradesman painters but of the sitter and commissioner of the portrait. Fried argues that: 'more nakedly and as it were categorically than the conventions of any other genre, those of the portrait call for exhibiting a subject, the sitter to the public gaze; put another way the basic action depicted in a portrait is the sitter's presentation of himself or herself to be beheld.' [254] The nature of the self-presentation and display involved in sitting for a portrait met with an uneasy and critical reception; furthermore, it was presumptuous to assume the portrait sitter's role, a role best left to the heroic and powerful. After the success of the first public exhibitions, concerns arose about the type of access allowed at the exhibitions.[255] The open access allowed seemed unruly and the debates surrounding admission prices and the establishment of the Royal Academy suggested that 'you needed to

[253] Conway, *Private Interests: Women, Portraiture, and the Visual Culture of the English Novel, 1709-1791*, p.16.
[254] Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), p.110.
[255] De Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth Century Britain*, p.15.

be someone in order to see.'[256] Similarly, the debates surrounding the portrait itself suggested you needed to be someone to be seen as well.

However, the rise in the popularity of portraiture defied this critical uneasiness. By 1780, 44% of all genres displayed at the Royal Academy exhibitions were portraits.[257] William Combe captures this fact in his *A Poetical Epistle to Sir Joshua Reynolds*: 'This seems to be a *Portrait-Painting* Age!...It may be fashion; it may be the increase of Sentiment.'[258] Similarly, he also draws attention to the social signification of portraits during the period: 'In former times, Families of Distinction and Fortune alone employed the Painter in this line of the profession. But in these days, the Parlour of the Tradesman is not considered as a furnished room, if the Family-Pictures do not adorn the wainscot.'[259] Combe goes on to describe the miniature for women as 'an ornament necessary to her Station in life.'[260] The underlying reflection on social structure clear in Combe's description is simultaneously interwoven with aesthetic debates surrounding the portrait. John Barrell in *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt* describes a detailed hierarchy of artistic genres that were maintained by eighteenth-century art critics; within this hierarchy, history or 'epic' painting was placed at the top and portraiture near the bottom.[261]

The particularity of portraiture is repeatedly compared with the generality of history painting throughout these debates. The general manner was considered to be instructive and, when combined with the historic scenes depicted in such paintings, was meant to inspire 'civic' sentiments in the viewer. The 'general' in terms of style was a corollary of the general body of the politic. Painting could, it was believed by Joshua Reynolds, promote public virtue but

[256] De Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth Century Britain*, p.15.
[257] Marcia Pointon, 'Portrait! Portrait!! Portrait!!!', in David Solkin (ed.), *Art on The Line: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House 1780-1836* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p.93.
[258] William Combe, *A poetical epistle to Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knt. and president of the Royal Academy* (London: printed for Fielding and Walker, 1777), p.2.
[259] Ibid. p.2.
[260] Ibid. p.2.
[261] Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*, p.56.

only if it inspired citizens to think beyond their own interests. The portrait emphasises exactly the opposite: the interests of the individual sitter found its expression in the particularity of the painted portrait. Reynolds clarifies this distinction in his *Discourses:* 'An History-painter paints man in general; a Portrait-Painter, a particular man, and consequently a defective model.'[262] Portraits of heroic figures were acceptable and transcended their genre to assume the pedagogic purpose of history painting by inspiring civic pride and sentiment in the viewer. According to Barrell, the belief in 'the exemplary value of heroic images' was universal.[263] By contrast, portraits of the common man glorified social status and competition between individuals within society. J.G.A Pocock has argued that the foundation of civic humanism that these public paintings were meant to foster was based upon the principle that 'the integrity of the polity must be founded on the integrity of the personality, and that the latter could be maintained only through devotion to universal, not particular goods.'[264] Reynolds makes a further qualification to the hierarchy of genres by emphasising a distinction between public and private styles of painting. Reynolds, acknowledging the popularity of portraiture, argues that the display of lesser genres of art should be kept to private and domestic spaces: the proper place for the caricature, sketch or portrait was in a private cabinet.[265] Reynolds' distinction reinforces the concept of painting as a public good that is founded on the civic humanism Pocock describes. The fact that Reynolds aligns the portrait with the sketch suggests that there is something insufficient in the nature of portraiture. While the sketch is by default incomplete, there is a suggestion that the portrait's assignment to the cabinet is linked to the moral insufficiency of the form– a lack which could prove publically subversive. The unease with which portraiture is received by contemporary critics did not dampen the public appetite for the form itself and for pamphlets and treatises discussing art. Interestingly, the physiognomic texts of Charles Le

[262] Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses IV* (London: printed for T. Cadell, 1771).
[263] Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*, p.20.
[264] J.G.A. Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.89.
[265] Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*, p.116.

Brun, James Parsons and Lavater were all written in order to guide artists in their portrait painting.

Jonathan Richardson finds some reprieve and value for portraiture in the eighteenth century by providing a pedagogic framework for its reception: 'they that see their pictures are often secretly admonish'd by the faithful Friend in their own Breasts to add new Graces to them by Praiseworthy Actions, and to avoid Blemishes, or deface what may have happen'd as much as possible, by a Future good Conduct.'[266] Within Richardson's framework, the portrait becomes a mirror for the viewer; and self-reflection and improvement become part of the process of 'reading' the painting. Additionally, a link is made between the role of the physiognomist and the painter when he states that: 'A Portrait-painter must understand Mankind, and enter into their Characters, and express their Minds as well as their Faces.'[267] There is an overlap here between the discourses of physiognomy (the mind displayed on the face) and sensibility (the ability to feel intimately and understand others). Not only does Richardson emphasise the skill of the painter who must 'understand mankind'; the viewer of the portrait must also have the sensibility to be able to 'read' the message written on the face: 'a Man must be very Insensible that is not the Better for considering it.'[268] While the moral status of the subject of the portrait may remain ambiguous, Richardson reprieves the function of portraitature as a form by reversing the point of interest from the art object to the act of reading or viewing the portrait. Cleverly, Richardson places the portrait within Reynolds's own philosophy. When Reynolds states that: 'It is not the eye, it is the mind which the painter of genius wishes to address', he is again referring to the distinction between portrait and history painting by suggesting that portraiture is concerned with meaningless surfaces; an empty appeal to the eye.[269] By contrast, Richardson, reinforced by

[266] Jonathan Richardson, *An Essay on the Theory of Painting* (London: printed by W. Bowyer, 1715), p.16.
[267] Ibid. p.24.
[268] Ibid.p.68.
[269] Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses III* (London: printed for T. Cadell, 1770).

the discourse of physiognomy and sensibility, uses Reynolds' own arguments to show that the portrait appeals not only to the mind of the viewer but also touches the heart of the viewer. This emotive effect inspires self-improvement and as a result encourages a social bond between individuals that is equally as important for the foundation of Pocock's 'civic humanism' as the veneration of heroic deeds.

JOHANN CASPAR LAVATER'S PHYSIOGNOMIC PORTRAITS

In 1776, Lavater answered his own rhetorical question: 'What is the Art of Portrait Painting?' He replied: 'The representation of a particular acting human being, or of a part of the human-body-the communication, the preserving of his image; the art of saying in a moment all which one says of a partial form of human being and can really never say with words.'[270] Lavater's approach to the process of portrait painting contrasts with the principles highlighted by Reynolds; instead he favours the mechanical approach which emphasised the importance of 'likeness' and was considered less sophisticated and skillful by contemporary art critics. Lavater insisted on the possibility of achieving a virtual equivalence between portrait and person. The idea of the portrait as a 'speaking image' resulted in portraiture's value within his physiognomic philosophy. He repeatedly refers to the links between artists and physiognomists. For example, he claims that both must combat the obscuring effect bad light has on the features of the face. The act of portraiture is of vital importance to Lavater's philosophy because it is part of the visual process of physiognomy; it is essential to the 'act of looking' itself. The act of drawing or painting a portrait is also part of the interpretative act and as such forms an essential part of the training of the eye. In the *Essays on Physiognomy*, Lavater draws frequent connections between the practice of physiognomy and art, stating that art is both 'mother and daughter' to physiognomy. Additionally, he reaffirms the long association between physiognomy and the visual arts by referring to the work of

[270] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.13.

Leonardo de Vinci and Charles le Brun. The artists Henry Fuseli, William Blake and William Hogarth provided engravings and illustrations for the English editions of his *Essays* and Fuseli's preface to the first English edition of the *Essays* states that it is for the benefit of the artist. Lavater repeatedly reinforces this link between the physiognomist and the artist, both united in their mutual desire to observe, sketch and understand, through representation, the people around them. As such, representation functioned as a form of knowledge for Lavater.

Many of Lavater's editions of the *Essays on Physiognomy* were richly illustrated with portraits, silhouettes and engravings; these were books meant for an elite and discerning audience. The importance of the portrait's role in the philosophy of physiognomy is reflected in the fact that as further editions of the *Essays* were reprinted Lavater increased the number of silhouettes, portraits and engravings included. The number and type of portraits and silhouettes of Lavater's own face also increased.[271] Additionally, the style of the illustrations began to change and Lavater's profile is marked by lines and letters, giving it a scientific, schematic appearance. The linear and geometric aspect of the style of portrait included suggests his desire for physiognomy to be taken seriously as a science and for the *Essays* to acquire the status of a medical or scientific text book. Although initially emphasising the artistic nature of physiognomy, there is a clear shift towards the desire for scientific authority.

Lavater claimed that representation is an act of interpretation itself. Additionally, his deeply Christian perspective meant that he claimed visual resemblance was closer to the language of God than verbal language.[272] The visual language of portraits and the images included in the *Essays* are used to supplement and compensate for the poverty of the verbal communication

[271] Joan K. Stemmler, 'The Physiognomical Portraits of Johann Caspar Lavater', *The Art Bulletin*, 75/1 (1993), p.159.
[272] Shookman, *The Faces of Physiognomy: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Johann Caspar Lavater*, p.34.

of humanity. As such, portraiture is closer to the language of physiognomy and portraits can be analysed in the absence of the individual they depict. In fact, within Lavater's systematic approach, the portrait can prove to be more useful than a physiognomic analysis taken from real life.

Lavater's preference for the portrait, the 'sketch', and the silhouette is unsurprising as he suggested that the appearance of reality was merely a copy of the original image of God. Within his anxious mode of physiognomic observation is the desire to strip back and reveal the geometric and simple lines of the 'true' face. Consequently, he focuses on the permanent features of the face: the skull, the jaw line, the profile, the nose which was considered more communicative than the moving features of the face.[273] The static nature of the portrait is important for Lavater as it gives the physiognomist time to analyse and interpret at leisure and, therefore, proves more reliable than everyday encounters.

Lavater's aim is to remove the extraneous detail in order to get to the Godly image behind the 'human' detail. Thus, when he organises the philosophy of physiognomy into a system, the object of physiognomic observation is simplified and results in the concentration on a few heightened traits. Lavater's focus on the general impression both in his preference for silhouettes and in his isolation of key facial features fits with the dominant aesthetic of the day, that of the generalised 'grand style' favoured by Joshua Reynolds.

THE PORTRAIT IN THE WORK OF ANN RADCLIFFE

While the aesthetic nature of Radcliffe's texts has been explored by numerous critics, the focus has remained on the depictions of landscapes and Radcliffe's engagement with specific artists such as Salvator Rosa and Claude Lorrain. Critical analyses of Radcliffe's landscapes have also focused predominantly upon aesthetic traditions such as the sublime and the

[273] Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy, Designed to Promote the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, p.23.

picturesque. However, Radcliffe's engagement with the visual arts goes beyond landscape description. The influence of portraiture in general, in addition to physiognomic portraits, influences Radcliffe's character descriptions and narrative structure.

It is likely that Ann and William Radcliffe would have visited the Royal Academy and there they would have been exposed to the burgeoning popularity in portraiture. In fact, the influence worked in both directions: during her lifetime, the Royal Academy exhibited ten paintings and drawings based on Radcliffe's novels. [274] Peter de Bolla points out that the rise in popularity of art is linked to a rise in anxiety about access to this culture and the associated social status conferred.[275] Radcliffe partook in this public interest and access to art exhibitions. As such, she epitomised the middle-class, amateur interest in art that troubled artists and theorists of the eighteenth-century art establishment. In reaction to the growing numbers of art enthusiasts from across all social classes, new attitudes to the visual sphere established a 'set of markers' that distinguished the viewer and fixed them within a larger hierarchy.[276] These new attitudes to visual culture established a distinction between the 'regime of the picture' and the 'regime of the eye.'[277]

In her novels, Radcliffe uses a semantic field that is saturated in the vocabulary of painting: 'portrait', 'painting', 'picture', 'contour', 'draw', 'delineate', 'lines', 'images', 'colours', 'contrast', 'tint' and 'glow'. Additionally, she makes references to specific artists: Claude Lorrain, Salvator Rosa, Nicholas Poussin, Guido and Domenchino amplify the textual references to the visual arts; yet, her references remain limited and within her own lifetime were mocked as cliché by eighteenth-century critics. Regardless of her enthusiasm Radcliffe's gestures towards the pictoral arts would have been considered amateur by art critics. She had neither formal training nor classical education to rely upon. Her expertise is

[274] Rictor Norton, *Mistress of Udolpho: The Life of Ann Radcliffe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1999).
[275] De Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth Century Britain*, p.46.
[276] Ibid.p.17.
[277] Ibid p.23.

further undermined by her references to famous landscape paintings. In an attempt to assume the authority of the 'regime of the picture' and its prioritising of knowledge over sensual experience, Radcliffe simultaneously undermines her experiential authority; her narrow and repetitive references to a few landscape artists exposes a lack both as an art expert and an experienced traveler.

The pictorial language of Radcliffe's fiction strives towards the condition of visual art and yet faces 'the superiority of the knowing viewer, the eye that has been properly "tooled up", trained in the correct ways of looking and legitimated by the institutions of cultural evaluation.' [278] Radcliffe's use of portraiture also took place within the context of a gendered debate, which coloured the division between the hierarchies of genres. John Barrell states that women were for the most part excluded from the interpretative community of history painting.[279] Furthermore, Jay Lippincott also argues that women were associated with portraiture because they traditionally bought and commissioned portraits.[280] Finally, Alison Conway suggests that women were associated with portraits and their cultural and aesthetic denigration because of the parallels drawn between the form of the portrait and female narcissism. [281]

However, James Watt has argued that Radcliffe's use of literary references and epigraphs suggests that she is interested in producing a form of novel that assumed an increased legitimacy within the hierarchy of genres.[282] Similarly, it could be argued that Radcliffe's attempts to refer to the language of painting is a similar attempt to step beyond the limits of the Romance novel towards a higher art form which has cultural esteem and value. Radcliffe's texts take part in a developing eighteenth-century visual culture and use the

[278] De Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape and Architecture in Eighteenth Century Britain*, p.16.
[279] Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*, p.66.
[280] Jay Lippincott, *Selling Art in Georgian London* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in Art, 1983), p.68.
[281] Conway, *Private Interests: Women, Portraiture, and the Visual Culture of the English Novel, 1709-1791*, p.293 .
[282] Watt, *Contesting the Gothic*, p.22.

vehicle of the portrait to demonstrate that the eye of the heroine can be one of expertise and knowledge; that even without the training of the academy, the eye of the heroine can also be the eye of the connoisseur.

THE FRAME OF THE PARERGON

In *The Truth in Painting*, Derrida deconstructs Kant's third *Critique* by revealing the paradox that undermines the idea of the parergon. His essay raises the issue of the place of the parergon. Derrida's examples include the drapery on sculpture, columns of buildings and the frames of paintings. Through exposure of the rhetorical nature of Kant's aesthetic philosophy, Derrida challenges the binary that establishes the designation of the 'inside' or 'outside' of a given work of art, which in turn, is based on a division between the subject and object. As Culler explains, 'the paradox of parergonality is that a framing device which asserts or manifests class membership is not itself a member of that class.'[283] In his Preface, Kant refers to his third *Critique* as a bridge between the gaps left in his first two *Critiques*. Derrida argues that instead of serving an annexed purpose, the third critique, in fact, encircles the previous two, problematizing any assumed closure that Kant may be proposing. It is this assumption of a unifying framework that Derrida deconstructs in 'The Parergon':

> In this transcendental ambition, Kant asks that we read him without indulgence. But, for the record, he recognises the gaps, the shortcomings […]of his work[…]Where is the gap? What gap are we talking about? And if it were the frame. If the gap constituted the frame of the theory. Not its accident but its frame. More or less restated: if the gap were not only the lack of a theory of the frame, but also the pace of the gap in the theory of the frame. [284]

Derrida conceptualises the place of the text's border or margin. The interrogation of aesthetic presumptions about what constitutes the border of a work of art is a theme running throughout Derrida's essays. For example, in *Living on: Border Lines,* he demonstrates the

[283] Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p.196.
[284] Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting,* trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1987), p.67.

thickness of the border line and challenges the boundaries of a text by superimposing one text, Blanchot's *L'arret de mort,* upon another, Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*. Derrida performs the question he simultaneously poses in *Glas* (1974) and 'Tympan' (1972) with their columnar structure achieve a similar aim through a rhetorical enactment. For example, in *Glas* the texts are placed on facing pages so that the spine of the book becomes its border line. In his performative texts, Derrida demonstrates that the border line is habitable, a site thick enough to be a place in its own right. He also writes that he is 'less interested in breaking through certain limits' as opposed to 'putting in doubt the right to posit such limits in the first place.'[285] The parergon, essentially a frame surrounding a piece of art that is integral to the art itself yet separate to it, has distinct similarities to Lavater's principles of physiognomy. Physiognomy, as a perceptual process, begins to resemble Derrida's parergon when it breaks away from the picturesque as a framing technique. While foregrounding the frame of the body, the external physiognomic features also 'touch and co-operate' with the interior soul. In Radcliffe's texts a character's nose, eyes, brow, forehead are 'neither simply outside nor inside' the boundaries of the character as a whole. As explored in earlier chapters, Radcliffe's presentation of character collapses the boundary between internal thoughts and external physiognomy. In Radcliffe's novels internal thoughts and emotions are expressed through the body and sympathetic understanding between characters is achieved through physiognomic perception. Lavater's physiognomy also highlights the ways in which the detachable, external parts of the face touch the internal parts of the soul. The face becomes a parergon, circling yet never fully separate from the ergon soul.

A desire to structure and shape may have motivated Radcliffe's choice to include multiple framing devices in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Paradoxically, however, these attempts at structuring repeatedly punctuate and interrupt the main prose body of the text. The frame is

[285] Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p.187.

an explanatory principle, which, at the very least, assists the mind of the reader in understanding the message by reminding them what is relevant and what may be ignored; the frame also assists in the evaluation of the messages it contains. The navigational role of the frame is clearly demonstrated by Radcliffe's use of poetry in the form of the poetic epigraphs that begin each chapter highlighting themes or morals that will be developed in the chapter.[286] The reception of Radcliffe's poetry as ornament is further demonstrated when, in the nineteenth century, the poetic fragments were separated from the body of the main text and re-organised into a separate published volume. Apart from the epigraphs which begin each chapter, the poetry in Radcliffe's texts represents the interpolated compositions of the heroine and can extend to twenty-five stanzas. Towards the close of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, an isolated tale of over six pages long, is told by one of Emily's servants, Ludovico. The tale is separated from the main text under the title 'The Provençal Tale'. This fragment was subsequently expanded by Radcliffe to book-length form as *Gaston de Blondeville* and in doing so was encircled by yet a further frame, that of two travelers and their discovery of a buried manuscript.

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Ludovico spends the evening in the Marchioness' chamber and reads a volume of Provençal tales, a tale of usurpation and labyrinthine passages. In the Provençal tale, a Baron, alone in his chamber, sees an apparition of a stranger who promises to reveal a terrible secret of a situation hauntingly similar to the terrible secret hidden in the papers of Emily's father. The Baron's secret is so important that the Knight tells the Baron that 'in future years, you will look back on this night with satisfaction or repentance, accordingly as you now determine.' [287] The Baron is led through a number of secret passages in his castle to a forest site where lie the bones of an old knight who had been murdered– the

[286] The ornamental status commonly assigned to the poetic epigraph was recently demonstrated by the production of a Folio Society edition of *The Italian* in which the epigraphs were detached and replaced by wood engraving illustrations.
[287] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* p.343.

very bones we realise, of the Baron's ghostly midnight guide. This episode invokes associations with Gothic archetypes while the fact that Ludovico alone in a chamber late at night reads a tale, in which a Baron sees an apparition while alone in his chamber, blurs the lines between the fictive realities of the embedded tale and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* itself. As is the case with the interspersed lyrics, this interpolated tale represents one of Mikhail Bakhtin's incorporated genres, which cause the novel to 'assimilate their reality.'[288] Moreover, Ludovico's reading experience seems to mirror our own as readers of the text, particularly in the way Radcliffe handles the interruptions. The first of these occur about one third of the way through the tale, when Ludovico imagines that he hears a noise in his chamber – exactly the sort of occurrence that is common to Radcliffe's characters in such stressful situations. The interruptions suggest that the embedded tale will not remain embedded and the world of the meta-narrative increasingly informs the world of the narrative. In 'The Provençal Tale', the Baron, shivering in the wind blasts, feels the contrast between his 'present situation' and the cozy fire in the bedchamber he left behind; at this point, Ludovico looks at his own fire and gives it a stir. The embedded reality has penetrated Ludovico's own. In the third interruption, just as the Baron hears a voice that identified the remains of Sir Bevys of Lancaster, Ludovico looks up, imagining he has heard a voice in his own chamber. The frequency of these metalepses –to use Gérard Genette's term –seems to blur the boundaries between these fictive levels. [289] As if to emphasise this phenomenon, Ludovico goes to sleep after he finishes the tale and his dream conflates the two realities. The interpenetration between one fictive reality by another through the combination of embedded narratives makes the barrier between our reality and the world of the novel seem less impenetrable as well. This tension between fantasy and reality is one of the novel's most persuasive dialectics.

[288] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, p.78.
[289] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca:Cornell University Press, 1983), pp.234-5.

‘SHE ALMOST FANCIED THAT THE PORTRAIT BREATHED’: THE PORTRAIT AS REPRESENTATION AND REALITY

The boundaries between reality and representation remain ambiguous across Radcliffe’s texts and as a result call into question the difference between fact and fiction in her textual world. Throughout Radcliffe’s texts there occur uncanny transferences between the human observer and the inanimate object of the portrait. For example, in *The Romance of the Forest*, a miniature portrait begins to exert power over the character La Motte. The connection between the lived body and the representation of that body in the form of a portrait is again emphasised: ‘On examining the portrait he discovered the resemblance, and believing that his hand had deprived the original of life, he gazed upon the picture.’[290] The confusion between reality and representation continues when the fear that he has, in fact, murdered the Marquis begins to sink in: ‘he scarce knew whether he beheld the shadow or the substance of a human form.’[291]

In addition to this lack of clarity between representation and reality, Radcliffe repeatedly contrasts the two and substitutes one for the other in the text. In *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, Mary interrupts Alleyn’s musings and ‘he beheld not the picture, but the reality.’[292] Further to the repeated comparisons between representation and reality in the texts there is also a suggestion that the representation, the portrait, is preferred to the reality. Again in the *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, the love-sick Alleyn avoids the physical presence of his beloved: ‘when he could no longer behold Mary, he would frequently retire to the terrace.’ [293] Later on in the text, Alleyn steals a miniature portrait of Mary:

> He drew it trembling from his bosom, and beheld again that countenance, whose sweet expression had touched his heart with all the delightful agonies of love. As he pressed it with impassioned tenderness to his lips, the tear of rapture trembled

[290] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.180.
[291] Ibid. p.180.
[292] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.79.
[293] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.78.

> in his eye, and the romantic ardour of the moment was scarcely heightened by the actual presence of the beloved object, whose light step now stole upon his ear...[294]

The stolen miniature affords Alleyn the ability to study Mary's face in private. The emphasis in this passage falls on the emotional power of fantasy; a power that overrides the reality, which in Radcliffe's description does not amplify the emotions Alleyn is able to experience in isolation: 'scarcely heightened by the actual presence.' The moments spent in private communion with a painted image reveal the sexual desire of the male character while the physical effect of the portrait is emphasised: 'His heart beat quick at the sight.'[295] Furthermore, the use of vocabulary such as 'awakened', 'sighed' and the repetition of the word 'temptation' all have erotic connotations.

The portrait has an incantatory pull over Alleyn, drawing him back to particular places or 'spots' where he hopes to spend time alone looking at the miniature. Instead of being left alone, he is repeatedly required to confront reality, either in the figure of the legitimate male heir and patriarch of the family, who is also the physical embodiment of the barrier to union with Mary, or in the form of the beloved herself. Both of these real bodies are barriers to what Alleyn is actually in search of: a safe space and the peace in which to maintain his fantasy with the image of the beloved in the form of an object he can possess and conceal. However, reality intrudes and disturbs his pure and safe communion with the image. On one such occasion, Alleyn withdraws to the family's portrait gallery:

> In a gallery on the North side of the castle, which was filled with pictures of the family, hung a portrait of Mary. She was drawn in the dress which she wore on the day of the festival, when she was led by the Earl into the hall, and presented as the partner of Alleyn. The likeness was striking, and expressive of all the winning grace of the original. As often as Alleyn could steal from observation, he retired to this gallery, to contemplate the portrait of her who was ever present to his imagination: here he could breathe that sigh which her presence restrained,

[294] Ibid.p.67.
[295] Ibid.p.68.

> and shed those tears which her presence forbade to flow. As he stood one day in this place wrapt in melancholy musing, his ear was struck with the notes of sweet music.[296]

The painting captures a 'moment' in time that Alleyn can imagine and use to relive his first meeting with Mary. The portrait has all 'the winning grace of the original' and the emphasis on the likeness of the portrait and Alleyn's satisfaction with it highlights the lack of distance between representation and reality in the text. Radcliffe attempts to shut down the possibility of a gap or loss between the signifier and signified. Instead, 'the likeness was striking' and the love-sick beholder is satisfied with the representation.[297] In fact, Alleyn is not only satisfied but relieved by the absence of the heroine, he 'could breathe', while the presence of Mary later on in the scene seems like an afterthought which serves only to embarrass and bring a blush to the cheek of the hero.[298] Much like Johann Caspar Lavater's preference for the silhouette and the sketch over the awkward moving face, Radcliffe's hero is also content to substitute a static, controlled copy for the original.

Representations often have more power over viewers than the originals themselves. Throughout Ann Radcliffe's novels a vocabulary of enchantment is repeatedly used to describe the effect of the portrait on the beholder and the reveries it inspires. Words such as: 'enthralled', 'fixed', 'insensible' are used to describe both hero and heroine under the spell of the image. In *The Romance of the Forest,* La Motte leaves a recently discovered portrait in a tomb so that he can return repeatedly to 'chiefly indulge in the dreadful pleasure of contemplating the picture.'[299] An intense concentration surrounds La Motte as he sits alone

[296] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* p.92.
[297] Ibid. p.92.
[298] Ibid. p.94.
[299] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest,* p.181.

with his picture: 'in the solitude of the forest where no variety of objects occured to renovate his ideas.'[300]

The power of the image overwhelms the beholder, functioning as a form of 'punctum' in the text. Roland Barthes uses this concept of 'punctum' to describe the impact the image has on the viewer: the image can create a psychic mark or wound.[301] The image is, in many cases, more powerful than the reality of the object of desire itself. In Radcliffe's first published novel *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* the love-struck Alleyne hardly speaks to his beloved Mary in person; however, after she has gone her image torments him: 'His mind, uneasy and restless, gave him only the image of the high-born Mary; he endeavoured to exclude her idea, but with an effort so faint, that it would still intrude!'[302] The repeated 'sigh' of the love struck Alleyne echoes the physical pain Barthes associates with the sight of the image: 'it is this element which rises from the scene, shoots out it like an arrow, and pierces me.'[303]

> Alleyne, whose heart amid the anxieties and tumults of the past scenes, had still sighed to the image of Mary;-that image, which fancy had pictured in all the charms of the original, and whose glowing tints were yet softened and rendered more interesting by the shade of melancholy with which absence and a hopeless passion had surrounded them. [304]

Crucially, the self-absorption that accompanies the emotion of love for many of Radcliffe's heroes and heroines allows the characters a respite from their own self-consciousness and the social restrictions they experience. The heroine's self-conscious awareness is also described using a pictorial motif as they imagine themselves being observed as though they were already a still-life. In *The Romance of the Forest*, Adeline pictures 'herself surrounded by the

[300] Ibid. p.182.
[301] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Vintage Classics, 1993), p.12.
[302] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, p.10.
[303] Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, p.27.
[304] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* p.78.

darkness and stillness of night, in a strange place, far distant from any friends, going she scarcely knew whither, under the guidance of strangers, and pursued, perhaps, by an inveterate enemy. She pictured to herself the rage of the Marquis…'[305]

In addition to overwhelming and absorbing the viewer, the portrait may also embolden the beholder. In *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, the young hero's self-containment and decorum is subverted by the image of his beloved: 'he sought with breathless impatience, a spot, where he might contemplate at leisure that precious portrait.'[306] As Alleyn gazes at his stolen miniature, he 'awakened every tender sensation.'[307] As has been pointed out by Alison Conway, the portrait often functions as a synecdoche and metaphor for the beloved's body.[308] The act of being alone with the image frees the emotion that Alleyn has been containing and the boundaries between fantasy and reality merge: the miniature he kisses is an extension of Mary's real body.

The experience of the portrait is sublime; through the act of looking, Alleyn loses his self-control, transgressing the boundaries of the suitable, and falls at his beloved Mary's feet 'pressed her hand to his trembling lips', the overflow of emotions uncontainable.[309] As he kissed the representation of her body, he now kisses her real body as a natural extension of the desire transferred onto the inanimate object of representation. Emphasising the sublime nature of Alleyn's dissolution in the moment of beholding, Radcliffe associates a suspension of time with the suspension of decorum: 'the romantic ardour of the moment'; 'in the temptation of the moment'; 'so absorbed was he in the transition of the moment.'[310]

[305] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest,* p.81.
[306] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* p.78.
[307] Ibid. p.79.
[308] Conway, *Private Interests: Women, Portraiture, and the Visual Culture of the English Novel, 1709-1791,* p.117.
[309] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* p.79.
[310] Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne,* p.79.

THE FRAME AND THE TEXT: THE BODY IN THE LANDSCAPE

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* landscape description is used as a technique for maintaining decorum; it functions as the 'drapery' on sculpture Derrida describes when analysing the parergon. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the hero and heroine are reunited and rising sexual tension is controlled through a diverting description of the beauty of the landscape:

> As he leaned on the wall of the terrace, watching the rapid current of the Garonne, 'I was a few weeks ago,' said he, 'at the source of this noble river; I had not then the happiness of knowing you, or I should have regretted your absence–it was a scene so exactly suited to your taste. It rises in a part of the Pyrenées, still wilder and more sublime, I think, than any we passed in the way to Rousillon.' He then described its fall among the precipices of the mountains, where its waters, augmented by the streams that descend from the snowy summits around, rush into the Vallée d'Aran, between those romantic heights it foams along, pursuing its way to the north west till it emerges upon the plains of Languedoc. Then, washing the walls of Tholouse, and turning again to the north west, it assumes a milder character, as it fertilizes the pastures of Gascony and Guienne, in its progress to the Bay of Biscay. [311]

What began as a pleasant aside, 'an ornamental frame' circling Valancourt's declaration of love, is extended to such an extent that it replaces any original focus. The ornamentation, drapery or veil, becomes the central focus of the narrative. They continue talking further of the landscape and the digression threatens to erase Valancourt's declaration altogether.

Interestingly, Anna Seward's poetical novel, *Louisa*, provides a commentary on the use of landscape as an ornamental veil to cover the body and its sexuality. Louisa herself is characterised in the preface as having a 'glowing and picturesque imagination.'[312] The imagination of the reader is what depends on the success of the descriptive passages, 'A feeling Heart without a glowing Imagination will be tired of the Landscape-painting,

[311] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.105.
[312] Anna Seward, *Louisa: A Poetical Novel, in Four Epistles* (Lichfield: printed and sold by J. Jackson, and G. Robinson, 1784), p.5.

somewhat luxuriantly interspersed.'[313] Seward then directly addresses the criticism of an 'ingenious friend' who questions Seward's choice of focus:

> An ingenious Friend, after reading the first epistle, remarked, that LOUISA might have described with more interesting particularity her lovers declaration of his passion, and the manner in which she received that declaration; but the Author thought the present method of conveying that circumstance to the mind of the Reader more poetic. Pope's ELOISA is minute in her description of the awful Scenery, formed by the rocks, the streams, and mountains of Paraclete, but by no means minute concerning the amorous eclaircissement between herself and Abelard. LOUISA discriminates her Lover's early attentions to her, tho'she leaves the manner of his declaring their source very much to the Imagination.[314]

The diversion from a focus on the portrait of the lovers in the scene to the description of the landscape surrounding them *as* the scene is the literary equivalent of averting one's eyes in modesty and respect for the privacy of the characters. It is also the performative gesture of the female writer as embodied body, as though she blushes and turns aside in modesty, unwilling to watch the scene of a love declared. It encourages a readerly receptiveness whereby the natural scenery becomes the ellipsis in the text for sex. These ellipses must be filled in by the imagination of the reader herself.

The nature of the frame as an inconsequential 'ornament' independent from the text is ultimately challenged by a close reading of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. During their travels Emily and St Foix come across a cave of band robbers:

> St. Foix stopped to observe the picture, which the party in the cave presented, where the elegant form of Blanche was finely contrasted by the majestic figure of the Count, which was seated by her on a rude stone, and each was rendered more impressive by the grotesque habits and strong feature of the guides and other attendants, who were in the background of the piece. The effect of the light, too, was interesting, on the surrounding figures it threw a strong, though pale gleam, and glittered on their bright arms; while upon the foliage of a

[313] Seward, *Louisa: A Poetical Novel, in Four Epistles,* p. 6.
[314] Ibid. p. 5.

> gigantic larch, that impended its shade over the cliff above, appeared a red, dusky tint, deepening almost imperceptivily into the blackness of night. [315]

St Foix and Emily, like the reader, stand outside of the finished 'picture', observing the portraiture of the human subjects and comparing their physiognomies as they are illuminated by natural light. The ostensible subjects of the piece are the human figures, the characters Blanche and the Count; however, the centre of the portrait is displaced by the tonal effect of the nature's light. The reader's eye is led into the scene through a form of pictorial enjambment. While the narrative interest stays grounded with the cave of plotters and banditti, the text instead strays from the human activity in the cave upwards and away from the 'pale gleam' of human faces on the ground towards the 'red, dusky tint' of the larch on the cliff. While Radcliffe seems to carefully construct the composition of the scene, the successive broadening of the space and heightening of the trees necessitates the diminution of the figure in the landscape. Michael Kitson details the way in which Claude Lorrain developed his painting of the *Rape of Europa* in stages whereby each subsequent painting became more spacious than the last.[316] In the final version, the human form is inconsequential against the ethereal landscape. Nature, in both *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and Lorrain's paintings, often dwarfs the human, casting a shadow that obfuscates human features and renders humanity an unobtrusive generalisation.

And yet, Derrida argues that the frame surrounding a piece of art is both separate and integral to the art itself:

> A parergon comes against, beside, and in addition to the ergon, the work done [fait], the fact [le fait], the work, but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simply outside nor simply inside. [317]

[315] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.601.
[316] Michael Kitson, *The Art of Claude Lorrain* (London Arts Council, 1969), p.30. See also: *The Seeing Eye: Michael Kitson*: *Critical Writings on Art*, ed. John Gage (London: Mnemosyne Press, 2008).
[317] Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p.78.

Similarly, the use of landscape as a framing technique in Radcliffe's text shares this liminal quality; it is 'neither simply outside nor simply inside.' The fact that the landscape does not just 'fall to one side' like a curtain framing the stage becomes clear when considering Radcliffe's treatment of the figure in the landcape.

Radcliffe's treatment of nature is influenced by the presentation of 'heroic nature' in James Thomson's poetry which she quotes, and by the paintings of Nicholas Poussin who she refers to by name. Thomson's preference for 'general' landscapes such as mountains, valleys, forests and brooks presented under a variety of different atmospheric conditions typified the general 'heroic' style considered earlier in the context of painting. However, it is the role of the figure in that landscape that is particularly interesting to consider in connection with Ann Radcliffe's treatment of landscape. The human figure in the landscapes of Nicholas Poussin are subsumed into the natural scenery; the manipulation of scale, colour and the effect of distance reduce the importance of the human figures in the scene and fore-ground the overwhelming might of nature.

Figure: Nicholas Poussin, *Mercury and Battus*, 1648-9. Reproduced courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The body exchanges places with the landscape and becomes a parergon circling yet never fully separate from the ergon – the soul of the composition – the landscape. This dissolution of the boundary between the body and the landscape is unsettling. As Derrida says:

> We think we know what properly belongs to the human body, what is detached or not detached from it. We think we know the inside from the outside; the integral part from the detachable part.[318]

This circling and touching of separate and detachable features dissolves the essential frame or boundary of difference and we can see an example of this in the presentation of characters in Radcliffe's texts. There are moments in Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* where characters become strangely interchangeable, sharing features so much so that the author herself seems to become lost. The freedom to transgress the normative boundaries that constitute our conception of framed reality creates an uncanny and frightening effect for the

[318] Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p.98.

reader as we are also faced with some essential emptiness or 'lack' at the centre of these characters and the text itself. The recognition of the integral role of a frame also highlights the inherent lack at the centre of the work:

> What constitutes them as parerga is not simply their exteriority as a surplus, it is the internal structural link which rivets them to the lack in the interior of the ergon. And this lack would be constitutive of the very unity of the ergon. Without, this lack the ergon would have no need of a parergon.[319]

This revelation of a lack in the egron (soul or centre of a work of art) produces the sublime sensation of touching a void; or staring down into the abyss and experiencing the attendant vertigo. It is an experience of vertigo laced with the fear and excitement associated with the sublime. Radcliffe's use of 'Rosian' or 'Claudian' scenes in an attempt to imitate master painters of the seventeenth-century was animated by a desire to feel close to the natural scenes she did not experience first-hand. It is in this attempt to find a poetics where the 'real' world of nature and the referential world of the text become one that Paul de Man finds the fundamental ambiguity and tension at the heart of the poetics of romanticism.[320]

The lack of firm boundaries and border lines results in the text's structural wandering: it strays from the quest narrative of earlier models, signaling a break from Radcliffe's adherence to fashionable conventions. Radcliffe's wandering, labyrinthine narrative repetitively confronts the possibility of getting lost. This fear of getting lost in the landscape symbolises the possibility of the self's dissolution. It is this anxiety that provides the core of the novel, which itself has no focus and is continually straying from the centre. This anxiety permeates the structural nature of the text; the lines and boundaries that clearly define the

[319] Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p.90.
[320] Paul de Man 'The Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image', in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p.2.

personal 'inside' of the body merge and blur with the 'outside' of the landscape. Erving Goffman describes this paradoxical state of the frame as:

> These markers, like the wooden frame of a picture, are presumably neither part of the content of the activity proper nor part of the world outside the activity but rather both inside and outside, a paradoxical condition…not to be avoided just because it cannot easily be thought about clearly.[321]

However, he also describes the idea of the frame in relation to dreaming: 'Within the dream the dreamer is usually unaware that he is dreaming, and within "play" he must often be reminded that "This is play." [322]

THE CHARACTER OF THE TEXT

The Mysteries of Udolpho, while proving a resounding commercial success, formed a distinct and unusual figure on the late eighteenth-century landscape. Sir Walter Scott provided a clue to the peculiarity of Radcliffe's style: he emphasised the visual nature of her prose wherein there are 'scenes which could only have been drawn by one to whom nature had given the eye of a painter' and he claims that the scale of her penultimate text is not only 'on a larger and more sublime scale' but signaled 'a step beyond' for her fiction.'[323] *The Mysteries of Udolpho* deviates from traditional sequential narrative plotting. Ostensibly concerning the therapeutic travels of the heroine and her father after the heroine's mother dies, the text consists of the circuitous wanderings of Emily St Aubert through the countryside of France and Italy. The novel is punctuated with detours and towards the end of the narrative, the text drifts away from the heroine and shifts its focus to an entirely different heroine and hero called Blanche and Du Pont.

Derrida's concept of the parergon and the limits of the frame is also a useful way to further explore Radcliffe's 'step beyond' the bounds of traditional narrative structure. It is by

[321] Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (London: Harper Row, 1974), p.252.
[322] Ibid. p. 252.
[323] Sir Walter Scott, *Lives of the Novelists* Vol. 1, p.196-7.

considering the relationship between the aesthetics and narrative structure of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* that the porous nature of the text, its transgression across boundaries separating centre from margin and 'inside' from 'outside' is revealed.[324] Contemporary critics of *Udolpho* have customarily described the dual nature of the text and divide it between two lengthy 'quasi-travelogue' parts that bookend a Gothic core. The scholarly reception of the text, as the critic Terry Castle has observed, tend to favour the middle section's recognisably Gothic topoi which involve the atmospheric Castle of Udolpho and the confrontation between villain and heroine. However, this critical bias, which represses most of Radcliffe's actual narrative, implies that *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is read in fragments: 'We "read", it seems, only part of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*: the "famous part"', Castle states.[325] For example, David Punter claims that 'the incidents at Le Blanc are pallid besides the richly coloured and terrifying Udolpho scenes.'[326] However, this inability to confront, or critically treat the 'whole' of Radcliffe's text is a reflection of the texture of the text itself.

Gary Kelly describes Radcliffe's writing technique as one of continued expansion. Yet, he does not present this expansion in terms of the sublime or as a development of technical sophistication or ideas. Instead, he refers back to the concept of quantity when he argues that Radcliffe expands a 'few basic techniques' and the well-worn allusion to the primitiveness of her style is given a distinctly gendered tone when he describes her writing as 'absorbing needle-work.'[327] However, it is his reference to absorption that I want to consider in wider terms. Unsurprisingly, absorption, a complex and subtle experiential state, is not included in the emotional taxonomy Kelly develops for Radcliffe's texts. Absorption, as a concept, is related to an experience of aesthetic immersion (such as reading, the sublime) and, as an inward-looking mental state, is also central to the concept of interiority. Radcliffe's

[324] Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 13.
[325] Terry Castle, 'The Spectralization of the Other in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*', in Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (eds.), *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature* (New York: Methuen, 1987).
[326] David Punter, *A Companion to the Gothic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), p.67.
[327] Kelly, "'A Constant Vicissitude of Interesting Passions'': Ann Radcliffe's Perplexed Narratives', p. 45.

exploration of the experience of absorption has already been demonstrated in the context of the power of the portrait: the power of the visual image to hold the beholder in a state of suspended absorption. In Radcliffe's texts, the mental state of absorption is represented as a textual state and structure affecting the character of the text as a whole.

However, absorption remains without a clear definition. Victor Nell's *Lost in a Book* put the absorbed reading of narrative fiction on the map of scholarly interests.[328] However, while usefully characterizing it as a trance-like state, Nell left the concept largely un-theorized and further scholarly endeavours in both literary criticism and the social sciences have resulted in a terminology that is bewilderingly diverse. Contemporary philosophers such as Ciaran Benson describe the experience of 'aesthetic absorption' as an experience of 'losing oneself' when looking at a picture or reading a novel.[329] Wolfgang Iser describes this feeling of forgetting oneself as an experience of 'presentness'; as a reading experience, the state of absorption should, in the view of Iser, create an impression on readers of having experienced a transformation in reading.[330] As Paul Ricoeur recounts, Martin Heidegger also focused on the temporality of absorption when he described it as an ecstatic engagement that unifies time and 'holds together, in the most improbable manner, mortal time, public time, and world time.'[331] An interest in the experience of absorption is not new. In the nineteenth century absorption was associated with health and moral value. Elizabeth Barrett Browning argued in *Aurora Leigh* that the only good kind of reading occurred when one lost oneself in a book; the reader then received 'the right good from a book.'[332]

Radcliffe's texts present the immersion in landscapes of natural beauty as a source of moral good and rejuvenation. Additionally, Robert Mayhew has suggested that the repeated

[328] Victor Nell, *Lost in a Book: The Psychology of Reading for Pleasure* (New Haven:Yale University Press, 1988).
[329] Ciaran Benson, *The Absorbed Self: Pragmatism, Psychology and Aesthetic Experience* (NY: Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1993), p.156.
[330] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1978), p. 49.
[331] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p.156.
[332] Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (London: J. Miller, 1864), I:709.

emphasis throughout Radcliffe's texts on the inherent goodness in landscape is structured by a religiosity and more specifically a tradition of latitudinarian picturesque.[333] However, this argument is somewhat undermined by the role of sublime language in the contemplation of landscape. The divine is not inherent in the landscapes Radcliffe describes; instead, it is a reliance on rhetoric, imagination and nature that produces religious experience. When Emily is imprisoned in Udolpho Castle by Montoni, it is only through a recollection of the sublime in nature that she is able to find consolation in religious activity: 'She raised her thoughts in prayer, which she felt always most disposed to do, when viewing the sublimity of nature, and her mind recovered its strength.'[334]

Radcliffe is well known for her excessive landscape descriptions, particularly in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. A contemporary review in *The Gentleman's Magazine* commented on this fact when it was first published: 'We trust . . . we shall not be thought unkind or severe if we object to the too great frequency of landscape-painting; which, though it shews the extensiveness of her observation and invention, wearies the reader with repetitions.'[335] It has been well documented that Radcliffe's landscapes were the derivative product of secondary source materials. Radcliffe's own travels were limited and modest: she never visited Italy or France. In her texts the descriptions of sublime scenery creates a hyperbolic structure of excessive emotion throughout Radcliffe's texts and functions in one sense as an enactment of what Barthes calls 'the reality effect'. Barthes argues that within a narrative structure excessive detail and technical language, as used in Radcliffe's descriptions of landscapes, 'opposes the very order of narrative'. These details:

> …say nothing but this: *we are the real*; it is the category of the "the real" (and not its contingent contents) which is then

[333] Robert J. Mayhew, 'Latitudinarianism and the Novels of Ann Radcliffe', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 44/3 (2002), pp.273-301.
[334] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.345.
[335] Anon, 'Review of *The Mysteries of Udolpho'*, in *The Gentleman's Magazine* 64 (1794) in D. Rogers Deborah, *The Critical Response to Ann Radcliffe* (London: Greenwood Press, 1994).

> signified; in other words, the very absence of the signified, to the advantage of the referent alone, becomes the very signifier of realism: the *reality effect* is produced, the basis of that unavowed verisimilitude which forms the aesthetic of all the standard works of modernity. [336]

An excess of detail, therefore, encourages the reader to believe in a presence outside mere textuality. The text attempts to escape its existence as a site of placelessness and non-being by grounding itself in detail and the subsequent status of realism that is implied. In this way, Barthes describes the same process Blanchot considered when he explained that the text is always attempting to extend beyond itself, that literature cannot exist without relation to something beyond it. In the same way Radcliffe's lengthy landscape descriptions are, in part, the result of a desire to authenticate. The contrast between Radcliffe's description of the face and the landscape is striking. The 'economy' of prose used to describe the faces of her characters is countered by the quantity and verbose style of her landscape descriptions, the use of 'too many strokes'. It is this sense of overworking and exhausting the conventions of realism that Radcliffe demonstrates in her hyperbolic depictions of landscape; in part they are designed to create a real experience of the sublime.

In many ways the excess of landscape description is what makes *The Mysteries of Udolpho* stand apart from Radcliffe's other 'romance' novels. The 'quasi-travelogue' sections of the text act as yet another framing device, providing a frame for the Gothic core of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Radcliffe indulges in extensive and detailed description of natural scenery as her heroine travels through France and Italy:

> The aspect of the country now began to change, and the travellers soon found themselves among mountains covered from their base nearly to their summits with forests of gloomy pine, except where a rock of granite shot up from the vale, and lost its snowy top in the clouds. The rivulet, which had hitherto accompanied them, now expanded into a river; and, flowing deeply and silently along, reflected, as in a mirror, the

[336] Roland Barthes, 'The Reality Effect', in *The Rustle of Language*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1986), pp.141-9.

> blackness of the impending shades. Sometimes a cliff was seen lifting its bold head above the woods and the vapours, that floated mid-way down the mountains; and sometimes a face of perpendicular marble rose from the water's edge, over which the larch threw his gigantic arms, here scathed with lightning, and there floating in luxuriant foliage. [337]

Additionally, Radcliffe's descriptive passages closely follow a philosophy of composition in which height and depth is contrasted so as to provoke the sudden variation in contrast that Edmund Burke established as an element of the sublime: 'the river mirrors the trees that tower above it; cliffs extend beyond the tree line and then are lost in the obscurity of the clouds.'[338] Burke continues to describe the effects of such discrepancy on the nerves of the observer:

> When the eye lights on one of these vacuities, after having been kept in some degree of tension by the play of the adjacent colours upon it, it suddenly falls into a relaxation; out of which it as suddenly recovers by a convulsive spring. To illustrate this; let us consider, that when we intend to sit on a chair, and find it much lower than was expected, the shock is very violent; much more violent than could be thought from so slight a fall as the difference between one chair and another can possibly make. If, after descending a flight of stairs, we attempt inadvertently to take another step in the manner of the former ones, the shock is extremely rude and disagreeable. [339]

Radcliffe's use of landscape description represents and explores the workings of the mind. However, her descriptions are also calculated to affect the mind of the reader through their syntax and structure. Radcliffe repetitively contrasts height with depth, echoing Burke's description of falling from a height. The vacillation between height and depth functions in a similar fashion to the 'convulsive spring' Burke describes as Radcliffe attempts to keep her readers in a state of suspended tension. This aesthetic design is carefully controlled syntactically. Joseph Priestley, a friend of Radcliffe's uncle Thomas Bentley, described the

[337] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* p.37.
[338] Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, p.152.
[339] Ibid. p. 229.

aesthetics of the sublime in terms of grammar in the tenth lecture of his 1777 *A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism*.[340]

He states that 'sometimes a periphrasis comes seasonably in aid of the sublime, by giving the mind an opportunity to dwell upon the idea.'[341] Paralleling the movement of the head upwards to contemplate the divine, Priestley alludes to the sentence raising the reader, 'higher and higher.'[342] This style of punctuation was an integral aspect of Radcliffe's style, as can be seen in her journals:

> Made our way in the gig through the long narrow streets, and then, leaving Chatham on the left, mounted a very steep road, having wide views of Chatham, the docks and shipping, the new barracks –a town themselves– rising up a hill, with fortifications above the green mounds, with cannon and two small artificial hills, with flags. [343]

This description continues, 'On the east, Dover-the bay-the castle-cliffs beyond-the boundless sea.'[344] Radcliffe's syntax creates a sense of movement and she manipulates composition, light and angle in order to create a sense of the reader being led into a scene. While Radcliffe's text enacts the distinction between height and depth and the experience of sudden variation in perceptive experience identified by Burke as constitutive of the sublime, the repetition of these techniques across Radcliffe's multiple landscapes contradicts the role novelty plays in Burke's theory of the sublime. It is at this point in Radcliffe's text where the experience of the sublime and that of absorption overlap; it is through the rhythm and repetition of these descriptions that the reader experiences a state analogous to the absorption Radcliffe's heroines are experiencing. The lengthy descriptions disturb the linear movement of the narrative and the physical progress of the travelers. The movement of the plot is stalled while the reader experiences these pastoral, descriptive passages, during which time

[340] Joseph Priestley, *A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism* (London: printed for J. Johnson, 1777), p. 160.
[341] Ibid. p.161.
[342] Ibid. p.161.
[343] Radcliffe's journal quoted by Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd in his introduction to Ann Radcliffe, *Gaston de Blondeville, or, The court of Henry III : keeping festival in Ardenne, a romance St. Alban's Abbey : a metrical tale, with some poetical pieces to which is prefixed a memoir of the author, with extracts from her journals* (London : Henry Colburn, 1826.), p. 17.
[344] Ibid. p. 21.

nothing is happening. The only action is the action of observation; the reader's eyes on the page are analogous to the observer's eyes as they read the landscape. The act of reading in these passages mimics the act of observing and the reader becomes absorbed in the textual world.

The experience of absorption is in part created through the syntactical technique of periphrasis and the use of embedded poems which reinforces the similar experience of suspension achieved through repetitive nature descriptions. The poetry Radcliffe weaves into her texts stands outside the time of the narrative and plot, disrupting it, bringing it to a halt. There are 21 original poems inserted into the narrative by Radcliffe in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*.[345] These poems and the descriptions of landscape dictate the rhythm of absorption and suspense throughout the novel. Robert Miles argues that Radcliffe produces aesthetic rhythms that work on the reader's nerves. He proposes a rhythm dictated by the alternation between 'the suspenseful, the comic, the sublime and the picturesque.'[346] However, it is not only through contrasting aesthetic systems that the rhythm of Radcliffe's texts is created. The rhythm of repetition created by the hyperbolic scenes of nature is central to the particular textual quality of Radcliffe's texts. In fact, the rhythm of repetition is hypnotic and contributes to the state of absorption unifying fictional character and reader. Additionally, the rhythmic quality of repetition and absorption paradoxically combines a sense of movement with stasis.[347]

One of the most influential studies of absorption as aesthetic technique is Michael Fried's *Absorption and Theatricality.* Fried refers to the OED definition of 'absorption' that emphasises the full 'engagement of the mind or faculties.'[348] True absorption then is not

[345] The embedded poems in the novel are an excellent example of what Bakhtin calls an 'incorporated genre'.
[346] Robert Miles, *Ann Radcliffe: The Great Enchantress* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p.51.
[347] Rhoda L. Flaxman, 'Radcliffe's Dual Modes of Vision', in Mary-Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski (eds.), *Fetter'd or free? British Women Novelists, 1670-1815* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1986), pp.124-33.
[348] Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Dider*ot, p.56.

passive, a numbing of the faculties. Instead, the OED definition argues that we forget ourselves because we are fully present in the activity; this is a definition reinforced by Iser. Fried presents examples of absorption in the work of French painters from the early eighteenth century highlighting the way in which they are depicted as caught up in activity so as to seem unaware they are being watched. The images of people praying, playing, sketching, learning, blowing bubbles, grieving, listening or simply speaking functions by 'negating the beholder's presence' and therefore resists the theatricality of representational art.[349] It is this absence of theatricality and performance that makes the pictures so absorbing to the viewer.

Radcliffe's alteration between the aesthetics of the picturesque and the sublime, her use of embedded poetry and repetition combine to hold both reader and character in a similar state of absorption. Like the French painters discussed by Fried, Radcliffe repeatedly presents her characters as framed portraits of individuals absorbed in nature, music, reading, or the faces of others. She also attempts to create an analogous experience of absorption for the reader, thereby negating the distinction between observer and observed in the text. However, unlike the definition of absorption constructed by Fried, the state of absorption in Radcliffe's texts does not focus on the engagement of the mind's faculties. Instead, the character of absorption in Radcliffe's texts presents the mind of the hero and heroine as blank, unengaged, passive. Radcliffe's characters' suspension in time, their absorption in external objects, images, memories, has an inert quality, which is associated with the stasis of the portrait rather than the movement of real life. Radcliffe's heroines often experience this state of absorption during sunset and their internal thoughts at these moments remain indescribable. The heroine's mind is suspended between expectation and memory: an experiential state that captures and reflects the nostalgic mood associated with sunset.

[349] Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Dider*ot, p.56.

Consequently, absorption in Radcliffe's texts is characterised by the consequent disintegration and loss of self, which means that the experience of absorption and the sublime overlap.

The moments in Radcliffe's text where the presentation of absorption touches on nothingness suggest that the experience of absorption is also that of *aporia.* An *aporia* is a rhetorical figure marking hesitation. The origins of the word are Greek and Derrida translates the term as 'I'm stuck'. It was used most famously by Aristotle in the *Physics* in his discussion of the being and non-being of time. Derrida's description of *aporia*, as a hesitation or sense of 'stuckness', is useful when considering Radcliffe's textual structure.[350] In terms of narrative, Radcliffe creates a sense of being fixed to the spot as a single landscape is repeatedly described. As if gesturing towards the status of landscape as repetition, Radcliffe produces a condensed version of her scenery at one moment in the text: '– the mountains, shaded in twilight – the gleaming torrent, hoarsely roaring – the black forests, and the deep glen, broken into rocky recesses, high overshadowed by cypress and sycamore and winding into long obscurity.'[351] Elsewhere in the text, the repetition of lengthy descriptions of sublime or picturesque landscapes becomes a kind of despair: in the words of Barthes, the pain of digression is embedded in the text of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and the extended moment of the landscape description can be prolonged to the point of entropy.

The *aporia* of absorption affects the temporal nature of the text. As Benedict Anderson has pointed out, the sense of metaphysical disruption in the 1790s led, first, to the proclamation of a new calendar by France's Convention *Nationale,* to begin on 22 September 1792, and,

[350] Jacques Derrida, *Aporias: Dying-Awaiting (One Another at) the "Limits of Truth"*, trans. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p.78.
[351] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.155.

then to the establishment, within twenty years of the Proclamation of the Year One, of history as a discipline with its own journals and academic chairs.[352]

However, in Radcliffe's texts it is the mind's absorption that disturbs time. The *chronotope* of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* stands apart from Radcliffe's other texts. [353] The sheer volume of repetition, embedded poetry, lengthy landscape descriptions, and the absorption in mental images combine to create a sense of timelessness and a disruption of temporality. Paul Ricoeur has described this type of narrative disruption as a 'radically unformed temporal experience.'[354] This combination of factors, which seems to suspend time, creates the peculiar nature of the text. Critics have commented on the temporal disruption in Radcliffe's texts and have pointed to a range of absences which influence the sense of time such as the lack of seasonal description despite the lengthy accounts of landscape. The absence of references to the days of the week, months or specific times of day in contrast to the constant references to mornings, evenings and nights has led Paul Ricoeur to state that *The Mysteries of Udolpho* time is not 'the time of the world.' [355] *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* sense of time is what Bakhtin calls 'a subjective playing with time, an emotional and lyrical stretching and compressing of it' which is a characteristic of mythological or adventure time. [356]

However, it is in part the attempt to render a state of absorption that culminates in the peculiar temporal nature of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. The turn inwards during these moments reveals an emptiness where there should be a depiction of internal dialogue and reflection. It is in part the emphasis on moments of complete absorption that stymie the progress of the heroine as well as her characterisation and development. D. L. Macdonald states that 'since Emily learns nothing she does not already know from her experiences, there

[352] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), pp.193-4.
[353] Mikhail Bakhtin's word for 'time space' in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, p.84.
[354] Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, p.72.
[355] Ibid. p.89.
[356] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, p.155.

is no reason for them not to repeat themselves over and over....Since nothing is happening in the novel, there is no reason for it ever to stop.' [357] At the end of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily has come full circle, she has returned to her point of origin and her marriage to Valancourt happens as if it was the original wedding planned at the beginning of the text. Radcliffe's text then perfectly fits the 'adventure time' of Greek romance that Bakhtin describes:

> The first meeting of hero and heroine and the sudden flare-up of their passion for each other is the starting point for plot movement; the end point of plot movement is their successful union in marriage. All action in the novel unfolds between these two points. These points-the poles of plot movement-are themselves crucial events in the heroes' lives; in and of themselves they have a biographical significance. But it is not around these that the novel is structured; rather, it is around that which lies (that which takes place) between them. But in essence nothing need lie between them....it is as if absolutely nothing had happened between these two moments, as if the marriage had been consummated on the day after their meeting.[358]

[357] D. L. Macdonald, 'Bathos and Repetition: The Uncanny in Radcliffe', *Journal of Narrative Technique*, 19/2 (1989), pp.197-204.
[358] Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, p.89.

THE END OF THE TEXT

Tzvetan Todorov's concept of the 'hesitation' is similar to that of absorption, which could be described as a prolonged hesitation. Todorov uses the term to characterise the duration of the fantastic: 'the fantastic ...lasts only as long as a certain hesitation: a hesitation common to reader and character, who must decide whether or not what they perceive derives from "reality" as it exists in the common opinion.'[359] The word hesitation is usually associated with the momentary. However, in Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, what may in other contexts be momentary is prolonged and extended as the reader exists suspended in a world that is not quite natural. The reader remains in a state of hesitation and suspension, in part, because Radcliffe's narrative defers the final resolution of various mysteries and uncertainties until the final few pages; consequently, the reader is kept in a state of suspended curiosity. The reader is left awaiting answers and resolution as these gaps interrupt and suspend 'the onward rush of narrative.'[360] As Scott Mackenzie has described the mysterious tunes, words, figures, gaps in manuscripts, mistaken resemblances and the mystery of what lies behind the veil in the picture gallery produce 'plotted lacunae': literal and figurative gaps in the writing.[361]

Radcliffe's staging of the classical resolution scene is an attempt to suture these figural gaps in knowledge. Anagnorisis or recognition is one of the three parts that constitute an Aristotelian definition of plot. In addition to recognition, Aristotelian plots must contain pathos and peripeteia. Peripeteia is a reversal of circumstances or change of fortune. These terms taken from the *Poetics* are useful in the context of the construction of Radcliffe's narratives as the portrait is regularly used to facilitate a scene of recognition or the discovery

[359] Todorov Tzvetan, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, trans. Richard Howard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), p.41.
[360] Scott MacKenzie, 'Ann Radcliffe's Gothic Narrative and the Readers at Home', *Studies in the Novel*, 31/4 (1999), p.417.
[361] Ibid. p.416.

of a long-lost relation in eighteenth-century texts. For example, in *A Sicilian Romance*, the heroine discovers a miniature portrait that absorbs her:

> One day that she was arranging some papers in the small drawers of a cabinet that stood in her apartment, she found a picture which fixed all her attention. It was a miniature of a lady, whose countenance was touched with sorrow, and expressed an air of dignified resignation. The mournful sweetness of her eyes, raised towards Heaven with a look of supplication, and the melancholy languor that shaded her features so deeply affected Julia, that her eyes were filled with involuntary tears.[362]

The discovery of the portrait leads to Julia's governess' extensive account of the life of the heroine's mother. Throughout Radcliffe's texts the recognition scene is often the culmination of a series of successive secondary recognitions that revolve around the physiognomic analysis of the countenance or a comparison made between representation (portrait) and reality (countenance). In *A Sicilian Romance*, the initial discovery of the portrait is a secondary scene of recognition that leads to the eventual discovery of the heroine's mother hiding in a deserted wing of the castle.

Within the recognition scene, the structural and thematic aspects of Radcliffe's text are unified. These structural and thematic aspects unified in the scene of recognition emphasise the central theme of knowledge: the character is transformed from a state of ignorance to one of knowledge. The recognition scenes in Radcliffe's texts often pave the way and are linked to the narrative's final change of circumstance or reversal of fortune (peripeteia). The recognition scene provides closure and a definite end to the wandering nature of the preceding plot. For example, in *The Romance of the Forest* the final scene of recognition centres upon a portrait that proves Adeline to be the inheritor of a large estate:

> Adeline pressed the picture to her, and again gazed in silent reverie. At length, with a deep sigh, she said 'this surely was my mother. This reflection quite overcame her and she burst

[362] Radcliffe, *A Sicilian Romance*, p.62.

> into tears. M. Verneuil did not interrupt her grief, but took her hand and sat by her without speaking till she became more composed. Again kissing the picture, she held it out to him with a hesitating look.[363]

Verneuil becomes Adeline's saviour during the final stages of the narrative, having been drawn to her by his own experience of recognition which is not narrated in the text. He follows her on the basis of her resemblance to a portrait he has seen of her mother: 'to those who remember the late marchioness, your features bring sufficient evidence of your birth.'[364] The power of the portrait and strength of its ability to stand as evidence in the absence of the original sitter is further emphasised by the fact that Verneuil has never met Adeline's mother: 'I knew the marchioness only by her portrait.' [365] Adeline is deeply affected by the miniature and yet Radcliffe suggests that the power of the face is separate from the power of recognition: 'it was not the resemblance she studied, but the countenance – the mild and beautiful countenance.' [366] The discovery of a long-lost parent (often a long-lost mother) is a recurring theme throughout Radcliffe's texts. Radcliffe's characters are presented with these unidentified 'lost relations' multiple times within the same text before the final recognition occurs. Alison Conway suggests that one of the attractions of the portrait for eighteenth-century literature is the transparency of this moment of vision.[367] However, in Radcliffe's secondary recognition scenes, transparency is complicated when the filial bond is de-emphasised. Consequently, 'recognition' scenes also function in Radcliffe's texts to build a deeper network of social links, beyond the family, between bodies that share a 'likeness' and resemblance.

These secondary 'recognitions' also allow for the expert reader's greater involvement in the text as they anticipate future plot developments based on the conventions of the romance

[363] Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, p.233.
[364] Ibid. p.223.
[365] Ibid. p.234.
[366] Ibid. p.233.
[367] Conway, *Private Interests: Women, Portraiture, and the Visual Culture of the English Novel, 1709-1791*, p.67.

text. Robert Miles and David H. Richter argue that Radcliffe's texts instigate a Gothic mode of reading that breaks away from the idea of catharsis. These texts are refocused on the reader; demanding an 'inward projection.'[368] Additionally, according to Miles they create a 'new hermeneutics of reading' in which 'the burden of construing the meaning of the text has been shifted onto the reader'.[369] Portraits and miniatures function in Radcliffe's plot to encourage this type of engagement with the text, providing clues for the reader as well as the characters within the texts; they are also used to refer to extra-textual narratives, interweaving story threads beyond the confines of the text, which the reader can reconstruct.

Lynch argues that there is a decline in recognition scenes throughout the later eighteenth century. To the contrary, I would argue that the recognition scene remains an important element of Radcliffe's narrative technique in the last decade of the eighteenth century. However, the reliance on the portrait foregrounds the importance of 'interpretation' and the act of faithful reading which is needed to support the fragile reliance on the image as a means of final recognition and resolution. For the most part, Radcliffe's recognition scenes rely on a portrait or miniature to reveal the truth and bring the heroine and reader from ignorance to knowledge. Lavater's faith in the truth of the portrait is reflected in the frequency with which Radcliffe relies on this medium to function as a form of revelation and discovery. However, while Radcliffe's heroine's fortunes are always reversed at the end of her novels, the stability of the sequence of recognitions that determine the final resolution remains fragile; their weakness is predicated on the fact that they rely on a representation of reality and the heroine's ability to identify countenances correctly.

The resolution scene is, in part, a realisation of the linear ideal of natural inheritance provided by Edmund Burke: 'working after the pattern of nature, we hold, we transmit our

[368] David H. Richter, *The Progress of Romance: Literary Historiography and the Gothic Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press,1996), p.123.
[369] Miles, *Ann Radcliffe: The Great Enchantress,* p.134.

government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives.' [370] However, in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the clarity of this linear line is undermined by the uncertainty surrounding Emily's parentage: Emily may represent the figurative or literal successor to the Villeroi line. Rictor Norton presents this possibility in his study of Ann Radcliffe and argues that Emily may, in fact, be the offspring of an incestuous union. [371] Narrative clues are repeatedly planted to lead us to this ultimate discovery. Not only does Emily bear an uncanny resemblance to the Marchioness, a fact that is emphasised repeatedly, Agnes also suggests Emily is the daughter of the Marchioness' secret lover. Her father's anxiety about Emily reading his papers remains mysterious and suggestive. The content of these papers is never revealed to the reader and instead functions as an 'unspeakable' lacuna in the text. The lines Emily inadvertently saw haunt her in the text: 'she shuddered at the meaning they seemed to impart, almost as much as at the horrible appearance, disclosed by the black veil.'[372] However, at the end of the novel, the significance of these clues is simply dismissed. The puzzle of Emily's parentage and the exact nature of the relationship between her father and his sister are never revealed, preventing final closure and recognition.

Henry Fielding considers the problem of recognition through the role of the hypocrite and the staging of deception. By contrast, the uncertainty underwriting Radcliffe's recognition scenes is embodied in the figure of the doppelganger. This further reinforces the epistemological anxiety established by the uncertainty surrounding Emily's true parentage. Terry Castle observes that characters in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* 'mirror or blur into one another.'[373] Both the Count de Villefort and the friar, who comforts Emily after her father's death, remind her of St Aubert; Du Pont is mistaken for Valancourt; Emily even sees herself

[370] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p.38.
[371] Norton, *Mistress of Udolpho: The Life of Ann Radcliffe*, p.275.
[372] Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, p.491.
[373] Castle,'The Spectralization of the Other in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*', p.45.

reflected in Valancourt. Furthermore, at the end of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, it is unclear whether the celebratory flags are flying for Emily or for Blanche. In addition to the striking similarities between their countenances, the overlaps between Blanche and Emily are significant. Both characters are married on the same day in a double wedding and are related to the Villeroi family: Blanche as the daughter of Villeroi's cousin (de Villefort) who inherited the title, and Emily as the niece of the Marchioness.[374]

Anna Letitia Barbauld and Sir Walter Scott both express their dissatisfaction with Radcliffe's endings. In 1810, Sir Walter Scott attacked Radcliffe's endings in a review of a novel by Charles Maturin in the *Quarterly Review*:

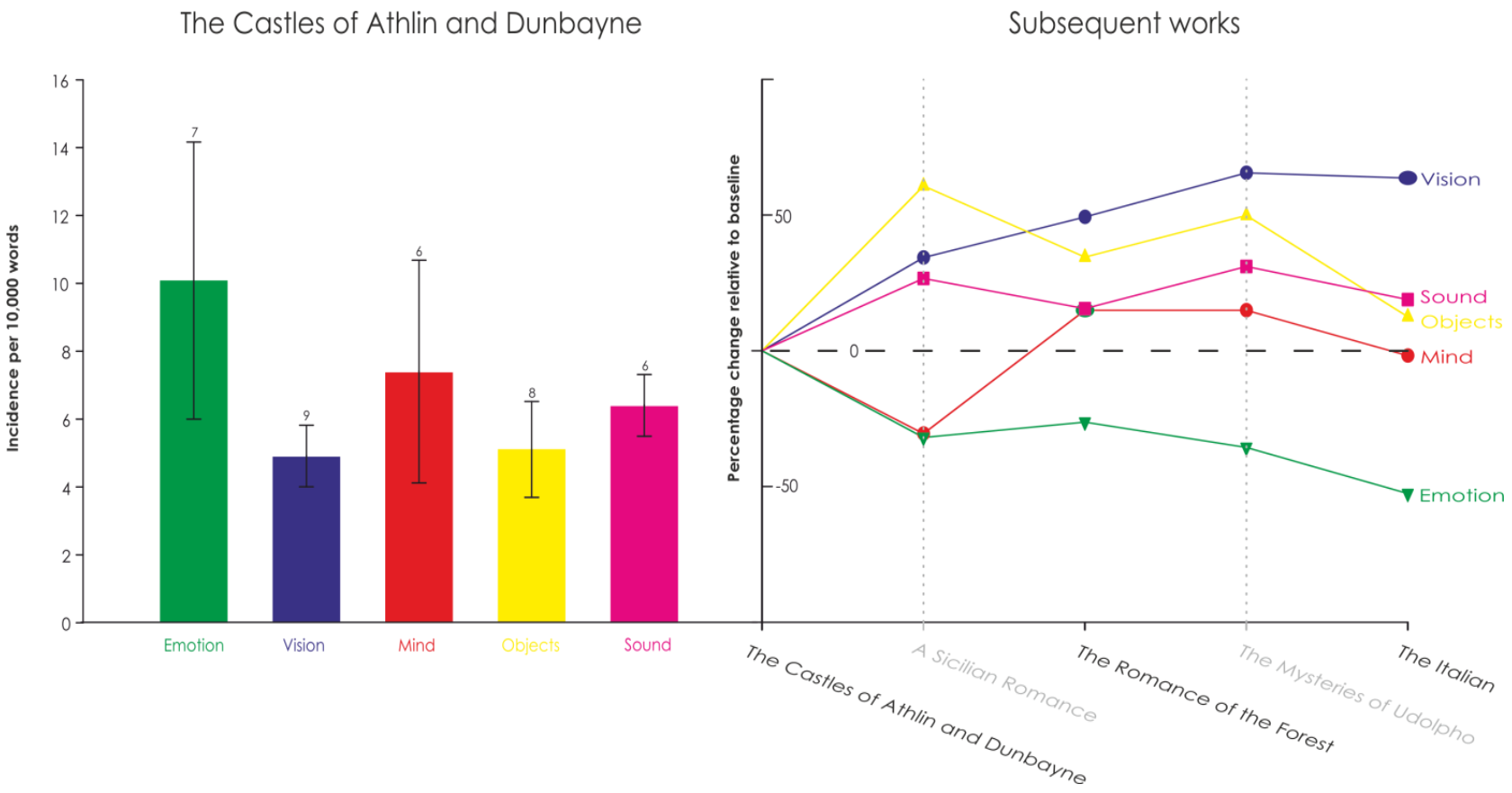
> We disapprove of the mode introduced by Mrs Radcliffe and followed by Mr Murphy and her imitators, of winding up their story with a solution by which all the incidents appearing to partake of the mystic and the marvellous are resolved by very simple and natural causes. This seems to us to savour of the precaution of Snug the joiner; or rather, it is as if the machinist, when the pantomime was over, should turn his scenes, 'seamy side out', and expose the mechanical aids by which the delusions were accomplished.[375]

Scott did not like the blurring of the boundaries between the illusion of reality and the narrative mechanics. In fact, Barbauld questioned whether Radcliffe's endings functioned as endings at all. Describing the explained supernatural, Barbauld points out that while 'all the strange and alarming circumstances brought forward in the narrative are explained in the winding up of the story by natural causes...in the meantime the reader has felt their full impression.'[376] As Barbauld implies, Radcliffe's endings do not satisfactorily close the gaps created in the preceding narrative.

[374] This character doubling is analogous to repetitions of narrated events. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* there are four mountain journeys, two shootings of Valancourt, two attempts to kidnap Emily, two trips to the Castle and two departures from the Castle.
[375] Sir Walter Scott, "Mrs Ann Radcliffe", in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott*, Vol. 3 (Edinburgh: R.Cadell, 1834), p.370.
[376] Anna Letitia Barbauld, "Mrs Radcliffe", in *The British Novelists* (London: Rivington,1810), p.2.

It is the unresolved problem of recognition, a problem reflected in the text's use of physiognomic principles that remains at the heart of Radcliffe's texts and ultimately makes her endings so unsatisfactory. Compounding this lack of closure, the emphasis on the heroines' 'ever-watchful' observations creates a sense of pervasive anxiety in the text. The act of physiognomic interpretation evokes various ambiguous, paradoxical, often competitive relations, not only between subject and spectator, painter or sitter but between the realms of experience they embody. The sense of longing created by the heroine's observations and repetitive re-reading of the face embodies the inherent problem of the theory of mind, a problem inherent in all our social interactions: what others are thinking, feeling, or planning is never fully transparent.

***SUPPLEMENT**


The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne
Subsequent works
Incidence per 10,000 words
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
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7
9
6
8
6
Emotion
Vision
Mind
Objects
Sound
Percentage change relative to baseline
50
0
-50
Vision
Sound
Objects
Mind
Emotion
The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne
A Sicilian Romance
The Romance of the Forest
The Mysteries of Udolpho
The Italian

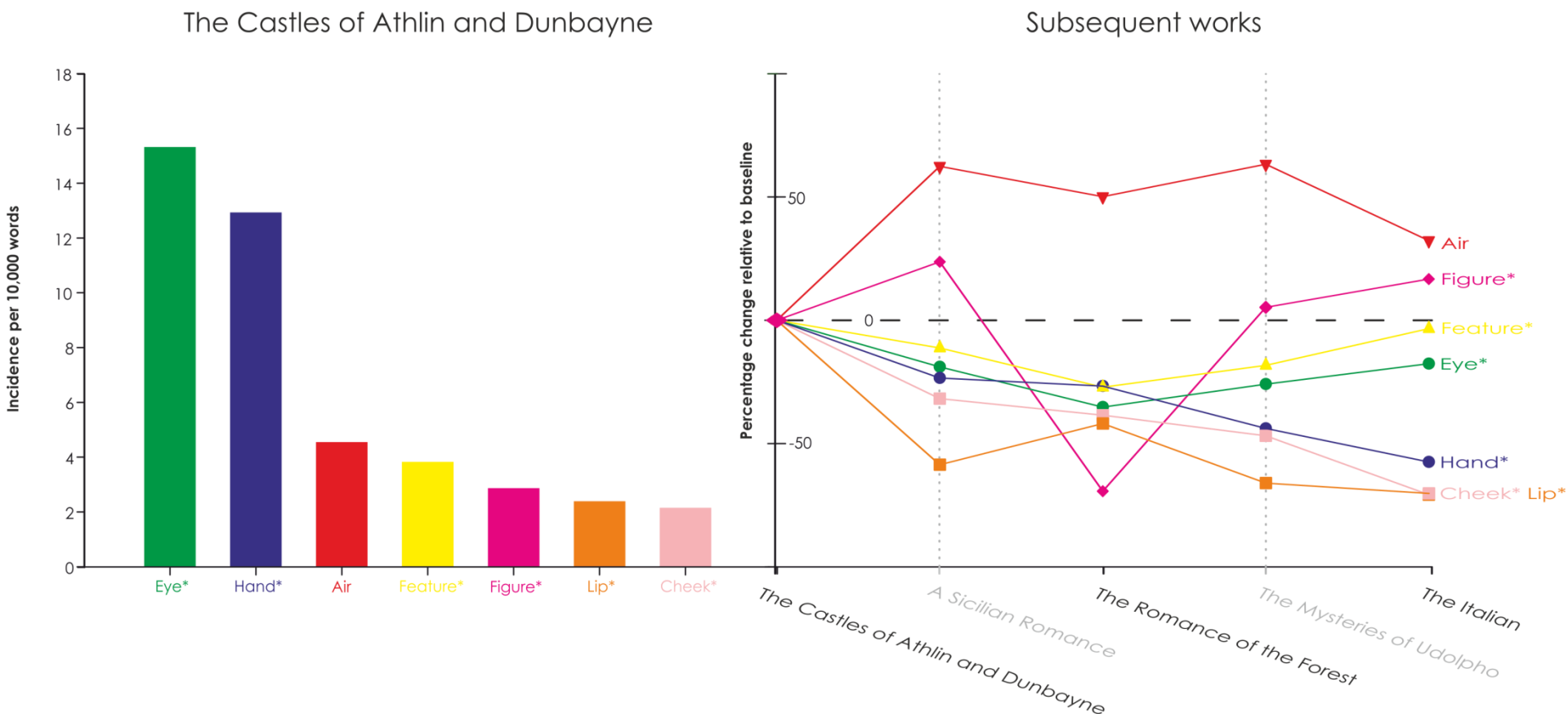
The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne
Subsequent works
Incidence per 10,000 words
18
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Figure*
Lip*
Cheek*
Percentage change relative to baseline
50
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Figure*
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Hand*
Cheek*
Lip*
The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne
A Sicilian Romance
The Romance of the Forest
The Mysteries of Udolpho
The Italian

CONCLUSION

READING THE 'CHARACTERS' OF THE TEXT:

The encounter between quantitative research methods and the humanities has produced a wide range of reactions within the scholarly community. Some have responded to the idea as though it was a monstrous aberration of Gothic proportions. Timothy Clark describes the characteristic approaches to technology:

> The traditional, Aristotelian view is that technology is extrinsic to human nature as a tool which is used to bring about certain ends. Technology is applied science, an instrument of knowledge. The inverse of this conception, now commonly heard, is that the instrument has taken control of its maker, the creation control of its creator (Frankenstein's monster). [377]

However, as Richard Poirier writes, 'All literature is to some extent aware of itself as a technology'.[378] Similarly, Timothy Clark in 'Deconstruction and Technology' argues for an 'intimacy between technology and language.'[379] It was within this spirit that I attempted my own small scale analysis of the thematic semantic fields in the five novels published by Ann Radcliffe during her lifetime. In fact, the turn to quantitative methods suits the general character and scope of this thesis as it is, at heart, concerned with epistemology.

In his book *Technics and Time,* Stiegler argues that philosophical reflection has traditionally pushed technology to its own margins.[380] According to Clark, Jacques Derrida is one of the most important thinkers of 'originary technicity' precisely because he takes on the consequences of conceiving technical objects (including systems of signs) as 'having a mode of being that resists being totally understood in terms of some posited function or purpose for human being.'[381] By refusing to explain either technology or language as instrumental, Derrida resists the widespread denigration of the technical. Derrida's questioning of

[377] Timothy Clark, 'Deconstruction and Technology', in Nicholas Royle (ed.), *Deconstructions: A User's Guide* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.238.
[378] Richard Poirier, 'The Difficulties of Modernism and the Modernism of Difficulty', in Michael Hoffman and Patrick D. Murphy (eds.), *Critical Essays on American Modernism* (New York: Hall, 1992), pp.104–14.
[379] Ibid. p.340.
[380] Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time,* trans. Richard Beardsworth and George Collins (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 89.
[381] Timothy Clark, 'Deconstruction and Technology', p.243.

logocentrism is inseparable from his questioning of the instrumental conception of technology. He states that: 'there is no deconstruction which does not … begin by calling again into question the dissociation between thought and technology, especially when it has a hierarchical vocation, however secret, subtle, sublime or denied it may be.'[382] Thus, once again, Derrida makes it explicit that the dissociation between thought and technology is – as is every other binary opposition – hierarchical. Consequently, this dissociation between thought and technology allows for the devaluation of one of the two terms of the binary: in this case, technology. Johanna Drucker in her study *SpecLab* warns the humanities against the premise of objectivity embodied by computational methodologies. For her, the infatuation of the humanities with computation is in danger of promoting the idea of natural languages fostered in part by the legacy of structural linguists.[383] In the same way that physiognomic methods of facial analysis offered the potential for a transparent, natural language in the eighteenth century quantitative research methods also offer the potential for a pure form of knowledge. However, this ideal should be questioned and challenged in the same way that physiognomic discourses were challenged.

Essentially, quantitative techniques such as text mining and visualizations function as a magnifying glass; they can be used as a tool to help the reader look at a small part of the text in order to make a general argument about its whole. Quantitative methods are tools for augmenting human powers of observation. However, computers and digital tools do not offer pure knowledge or 'objective' data. Realistically, fallibility, and uncertainty play a role in any digital or quantitative tool's ability to represent knowledge about the text, because these are the qualities of those who design and use the tool. Consequently, no matter how complex or how simple they are, the computational tools are fallible because researchers are fallible.

[382] Timothy Clark, 'Deconstruction and Technology,' p.240.
[383] Johanna Druker, *Speclab: Digital Aesthetics and Projects in Speculative Computing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p.23.

Ultimately, my main aim was merely to include quantitative methodologies within the conversation of this current literary study; these results participate alongside every other critical voice, philosopher or secondary source included in the main body of this study. John Unsworth's definition of Digital Humanities as 'a practice of representation, a form of modeling' in order to create a further understanding serves as a useful statement to guide the aims of my own attempts at visualizing Ann Radcliffe's thematic preoccupations.[384]

Quantitative 'text mining' is simply another form of close reading providing a further way to treat the evidence of the text itself. The process involved in text mining a set of literary texts is threefold: identify suitable texts and prepare for analysis, decide upon criteria for classification (such as clustering repetitive phrases or word frequencies), and finally apply these criteria to the documents. For this study, text mining procedures were helpful in illuminating the development of thematic patterns across Radcliffe's five novels. By identifying quantifiable pieces of a text (word frequencies) the incidence of five key concepts in Radcliffe's five major works were identified from the top 100 most frequent words. The five concepts or themes that emerged from the date were: emotion, vision, mind, objects and sound.

From an analysis of the relative frequencies of these categories in relation to Radcliffe's first text it is clear that she begins by foregrounding emotive vocabulary in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne.* Vocabulary associated with the mind and thought is also important in Radcliffe's first book. The development traced throughout her novels then shows a steady shift in emphasis away from emotive language towards the prioritising of vision and the vocabulary of perception including words such as 'eye' and 'countenance'. These are

[384] John Unsworth, 'What is Humanities Computing, and What is Not?', in Georg Braungart, Karl Eibl & Fotis Jannidis (eds.), *Jahrbuch für Computerphilologie*, 4 (2002), last accessed on 23rd January 2013, <http://computerphilologie.uni-muenchen.de/jg02/unsworth.html>.

interesting findings and seem to reinforce the argument proposed in this thesis that Radcliffe's preoccupation with epistemology is manifested in the visual field.

This shift in thematic emphasis could be used to support Gary Kelly's argument that Radcliffe's texts dramatize a triumph of reason over emotion or Foucault's argument that the primary purpose of the Gothic text is to explore obscurity and darkness as a means of staging their defeat and the installation of transparency. However, the support for the theories of Foucault and Kelly if only taken from these quantitative results is misleading. Without a careful reading of the text in full the nature of 'the acts of looking' that Radcliffe favours is unclear. By accompanying these quantitative results with a close reading of the text it becomes clear that the visual field is permeated with anxiety and a lack of certainty weakening the argument that these 'acts of looking' are necessarily acts of reason or transparency as Kelly and Foucault would suggest. Consequently, while the data derived from this initial test does seem to suggest support for the importance of the visual field in Radcliffe texts it is clear that text mining should only be used as a supplement to the traditional method of close reading.

APPENDIX 1: *QUANTITATIVE METHODS

The incidences of five key concepts in Radcliffe's novels were explored and the results displayed in the two graphic visualizations that are presented before the conclusion section of this thesis. The left panel shows the incidence per 10,000 of words in five main categories: emotion, vision, mind, objects and sound for Radcliffe's first book, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*. The bars represent the standard error of the mean and the number above these is the number of words in that category. It is notable that Radcliffe's first book pays considerably more attention to emotion. The panel on the right of the visualizations illustrates the subsequent changes in the incidence of words in each group relative to their appearance in *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*. From this, it can clearly be seen that Radcliffe's interest in vision increases as she developed her writing technique.

The full text of *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), *A Sicilian Romance* (1790), *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) were obtained from Project Gutenberg, and copies of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), and *The Italian* (1797) were obtained from the Chadwick Healy Database. These five books contained a total of 709,702 words.

I removed from this group the standard Taporware set of 485 words, numbers and symbols, then ranked the remaining words by frequency using the Corpus Type Frequencies Grid Tool (http://voyeurtools.org/tool/CorpusTypeFrequenciesGrid/). The corpus contained a total of 16,850 unique words, of which 4454 occurred more than ten times (an incidence of 0.001%); from this list I removed the following 418 words because they were proper nouns:

Said, Emily, La, Vivaldi, Elena, Adeline, Montoni, Marquis, Schedoni, Valancourt, St, Signor, Annette, Aubert, Julia, Theodore, Luc, Ludovico, Paulo, Earl, Alleyn, Peter, Marchesa, Ferdinand, Marchioness, Emily's, Louis, Baron, Countess, Abbess, Morano, Cheron, Mary, Spalatro, Hippolitus, Dorothee, Olivia, Marchese, Madame, Motte, Count, Father, Castle, Man, Lady, Chateau, Ma'amselle, Lord, Abbey, Men, House, Son, Aunt, Confessor, Persons, Servant, Daughter, Servants, Madam, Sir, Master, Brother, Monk,

Blanche, Signora, Mother, Wife, Cottage, Inquisitor, Sister, Nun, Naples, Forest, Church, Thither, Woman, Clara, Gallery, Du, Villa, Chapter, Father's, Guard, Prisoner, Tribunal, Duke, General, Paris, Theresa, Montoni's, Monastery, Horses, Tower, Chevalier, Child, Husband, Bianchi, France, Chief, Niece, Banditti, Quesnel, Monsieur, Vivaldi's, Vallee, Venice, Abate, Chambers, Children, Estates, Osbert, Elena's, Mons, Cavigni, Officers, Horse, Physician, Village, Baroness, Languedoc, Chapel, Beatrice, Verezzi, Barnardine, Inn, Edifice, Italian, Nuns, Peasant, Youth, Hither, Italy, Parlour, Utmost, Marquis's, Ansaldo, San, Udolpho, Gentleman, Neighbourhood, Turret, Companions, Dungeon, Soldier, Towers, Building, Nicola, Priest, Emilia, Girl, Mademoiselle, Altieri, Bertrand, Adeline's, Ma'am, Malcolm, Schedoni's, Verneuil, Santa, Agnes, Count's Carlo, Tholouse, Voisin, Foix, Friar, Soldiers, Bonarmo, Marco, Michael, Peasants, Bruno, Ladies, Murderer, Orsino, Parent, Surgeon, Attendants, Ere, Gascony, Henri, Laurentini, Rosalba, Menon, Ruffian, Criminal, It's, Paluzzi, Parents, Estate, Guests, Lady's, Montalt, Santo, Alps, Maria, Mazzini, Pavilion, Clan, Oft, Tis Valancourt's, Aunt's, French, Laura, Mules, Portico, Adieu, Altar, Guards, Cabin, D'aunoy, Matilda, Saloon, Jeronimo, Cloisters, Inquisitors, Louisa, Monks, Motte's, Stefano, Villeroi, Female, Fugitives, Boy, Cloister, Her's, Messenger, Penitentiary, Rome, Aubert's, Clairval, Palace, Vicar-General, Athlin, Awed, Bonnac, Cavalier, Dunbayne, Knight, Sisters, Celano, Chateau-Le-Blanc, Hamlet, Dog, Dwelling, Housekeeper, I'll, Master's, Peter's, Pieta, Sentinel, Troops, Bertolini, Centinels, Fortress, Inhabitant, Julia's, Maddelina, Mother's, Partner, Tuscany, Caterina, Fishing-House, Marchesa's, Nobleman, Saint, Villefort, Annette's, Attendant, Brothers, Infant, Orphan, Robert, Rousillon, Venetian, Vereza, Baróne, Centinel, Maestro, Pilgrims, Porter, Robber, Shepherd, Cornelia, Daughters, Frances, Horseback, Leloncourt, Watch-Tower, Captain, Edmund, Ev'ry, Friars, Groups, Horsemen, Jacques, King's, Ms, Muleteer, Parental, Poniard, Principal, Sebastian, Signor's, Brother's, Fathers, Garonne, Ii, Madame's, Sicily, Steward, Theodore's, Auboine, Ay, Cottages, Englishman, Morano's, Sentinels, Switzerland, Valet, Benedictine, Conductor, Luc's, //, Nun's, Roman, Son's, Villas, Vincentio, Animal, Carriages, Coach, Doctor, Giorno, Hah, Iv, King, O'clock, One's, Poet, Secretary, Shepherd's, Shepherds, Stiletto, Th', Thomson, Women, Zampari, Beaujeu, Childhood, Earl's, Fishermen, Geneva, Gondola, Guardian, Iii, Lordship, Pavillion, Piéta, Quesnel's, Reverend, Towns, Uncle, Apennine, Arcades, Beds, Cabinet, Carmelites, Fish, Fishing, Habitable, Hunter's, Ludovico's, Luovo, Milton, Pierre, Provence, Sicilian, Terraces, Vellorno, Ancestors, Assassins, Brenta, Cavaliers, Dogs, Dorothee's, Felíce, Hat, Landlord, Lord's, Lyons, Margaritone, Milk, Monastic, Monk's, Olivia's, Oriel, Palaces, Palermo, Rob, Spanish, Thro', Tyrant, Vaceau, Vi, Vii, Xi, Abbess's, //, Augustin, Baron's, Barreaux, Bianchi's, Blanche's, Can't, Chevalier's, Claire.

After removing these words, the 100 most common words in the corpus were: time, heard, mind, heart, appeared, till, door, having, long, night, voice, passed, moment, length, replied, thought, soon, know, shall, person, eyes, chamber, little, left, room, light, silence, countenance, came, place, saw, looked,seen, returned,way, air, hope, present, immediately, observed, silent, circumstances, perceived, subject, tears, scene, hand, day, look, death,evening, hour, scarcely, late, life, knew, conduct, family, near, let, endeavoured, fear,

spirits, steps, continued, gave, leave, melancholy, words, apartment, say, believe, sound, return, woods, good, away, distance, like, situation, concerning, speak, received, tell, longer, come, entered, remained, lost, opened, called, stranger, love, discovered, think, means, distant, friend, just, far.

I categorized these words on the basis of major semantic similarities, a process which resulted in a total of nine categories. The five largest groups of words are summarised in table 1 below.

Vision	Objects	Emotion	Mind	Sound
appeared	door	heart	mind	heard
eyes	chamber	hope	thought	voice
countenance	room	tears	know	silence
saw	place	fear	knew	silent
looked	steps	melancholy	believe	sound
observed	apartment	love	think	speak
perceived	woods			
look				
seen				

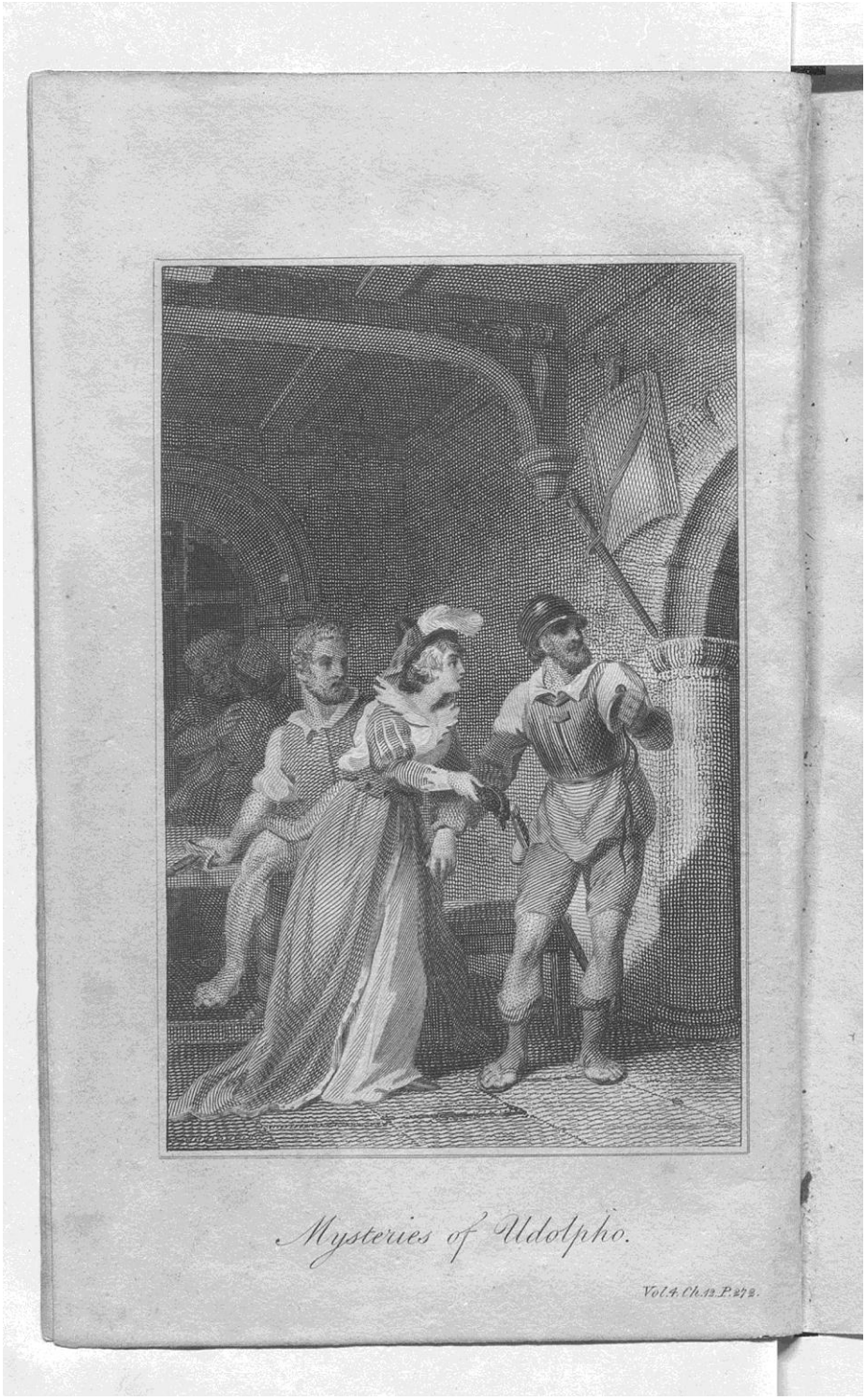
I used the Term Frequencies Tool (http://docs.voyant-tools.org/tools/term-frequencies-chart/) to record the number of times each of these words occur in five of Radcliffe's major publications; the results can be directly compared between publications because the tool reports incidences per 10,000 words. I used the resulting values to calculate a mean and standard error of the mean for each category. To facilitate interpretation of these values, and to ensure that groups could be directly compared, I normalised the values for the latter four books (*A Sicilian Romance*, *The Romance of the Forest*, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian*) relative to the first in the corpus (*The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*) and expressed these values as a percentage change relative to baseline. The results of this analysis are shown in the first visualization.

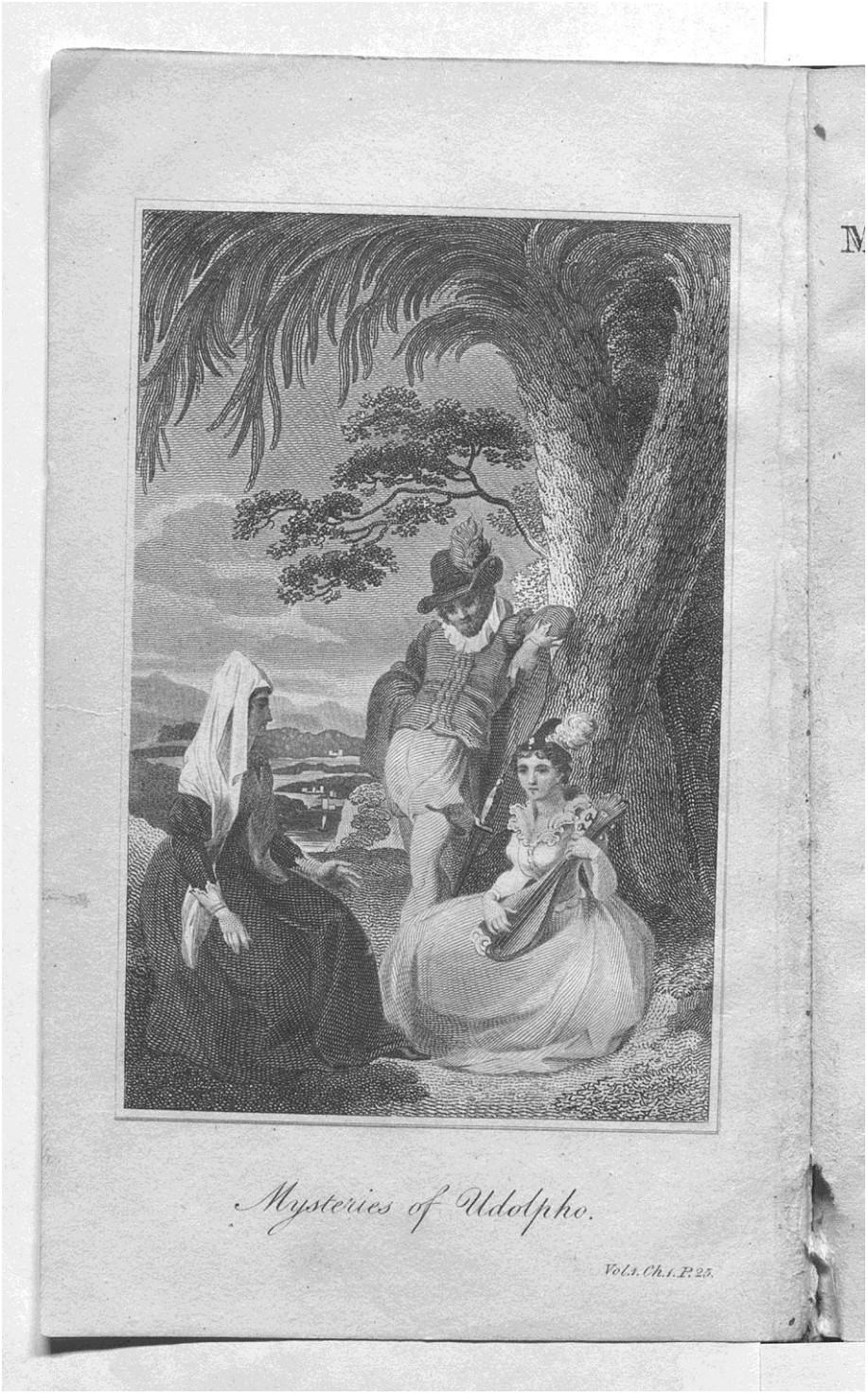
I then performed a further analysis, once again using the Term Frequencies Tool, to explore the use of the following keywords, which I identified as central to Lavater's work: Hand*, Brow, Eyebrow*, Chin, Cheek*, Lip, Upper Lip, Finger*, Limb*, Nose, Eye*, Forehead, Eyelid, Figure*, Hair, Complexion, Features, Shape, Mouth, Air. In this list, an asterix marks words where I also searched for occurrences of the plural; plurals were combined in the subsequent analysis. The results for this undertaking are shown in the second visualisation. Many of the words that I searched for did not occur frequently, and these are summarised in table 2.

TABLE 2:

Keyword	**Incidence per 10,0000 words**				
	The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne	*A Sicilian Romance*	*The Romance of the Forest*	*The Mysteries of Udolpho*	*The Italian*
Mouth	0.48	1.48	0.29	0.10	0.17
Brow	0.24	0.00	0.15	0.62	0.58
Finger	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.06
Forehead	0.24	0.00	0.07	0.21	0.12
Hair	0.24	0.59	0.37	0.10	0.29
Complexion	0.24	0.15	0.00	0.21	0.50
Eyebrows	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.00
Lip	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.12
Fingers	0.00	0.15	0.22	0.07	0.06
Limb	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06
Limbs	0.00	0.44	0.15	0.14	0.12
Nose	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00
Eyelids	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.03	0.00
Feature	0.00	0.74	0.22	0.34	0.52
Shape	0.00	0.15	0.00	0.24	0.40
Shapes	0.00	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.20
Chin	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

APPENDIX 2: ILLUSTRATED EDITIONS

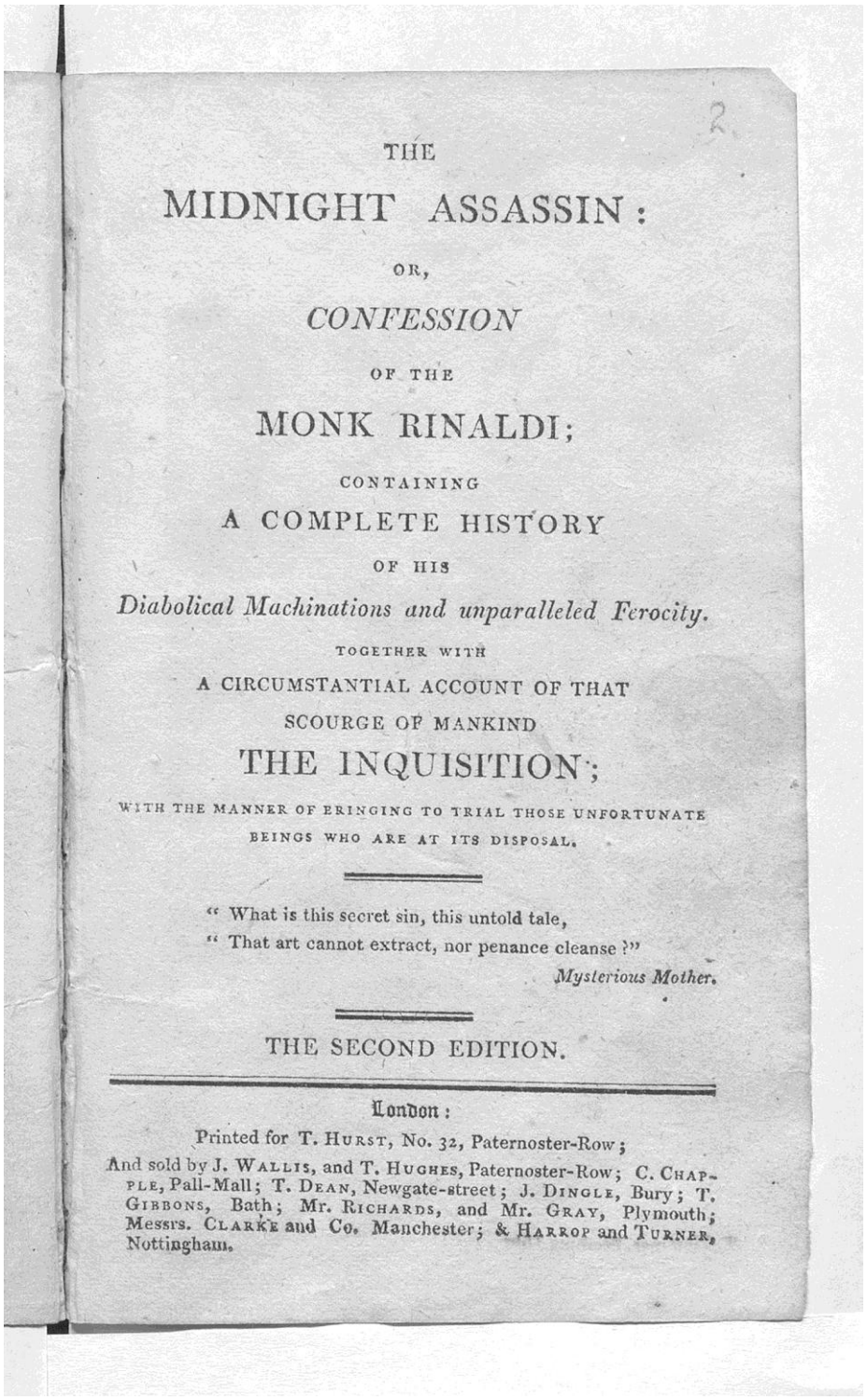




Mysteries of Udolpho.

Vol.1. Ch.1. P.25.

APPENDIX 3: ANONYMOUS VERSIONS OF THE ITALIAN AND A SICILIAN ROMANCE



THE

MIDNIGHT ASSASSIN:

OR,

CONFESSION

OF THE

MONK RINALDI;

CONTAINING

A COMPLETE HISTORY

OF HIS

Diabolical Machinations and unparalleled Ferocity.

TOGETHER WITH

A CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCOUNT OF THAT

SCOURGE OF MANKIND

THE INQUISITION;

WITH THE MANNER OF BRINGING TO TRIAL THOSE UNFORTUNATE BEINGS WHO ARE AT ITS DISPOSAL.

" What is this secret sin, this untold tale,
" That art cannot extract, nor penance cleanse ?"

Mysterious Mother.

THE SECOND EDITION.

London:

Printed for T. HURST, No. 32, Paternoster-Row;

And sold by J. WALLIS, and T. HUGHES, Paternoster-Row; C. CHAPPLE, Pall-Mall; T. DEAN, Newgate-street; J. DINGLE, Bury; T. GIBBONS, Bath; Mr. RICHARDS, and Mr. GRAY, Plymouth; Messrs. CLARKE and Co. Manchester; & HARROP and TURNER, Nottingham.

This for THE Louisa
From her
SOUTHERN TOWER;
brother Fred

OR,

CONJUGAL SACRIFICE,

AND

RETRIBUTION.

Qu'est il besoin d'aller chercher l'enfer dans l'autre vie? Il est, dit celle-ci, dans le cœur des méchans.

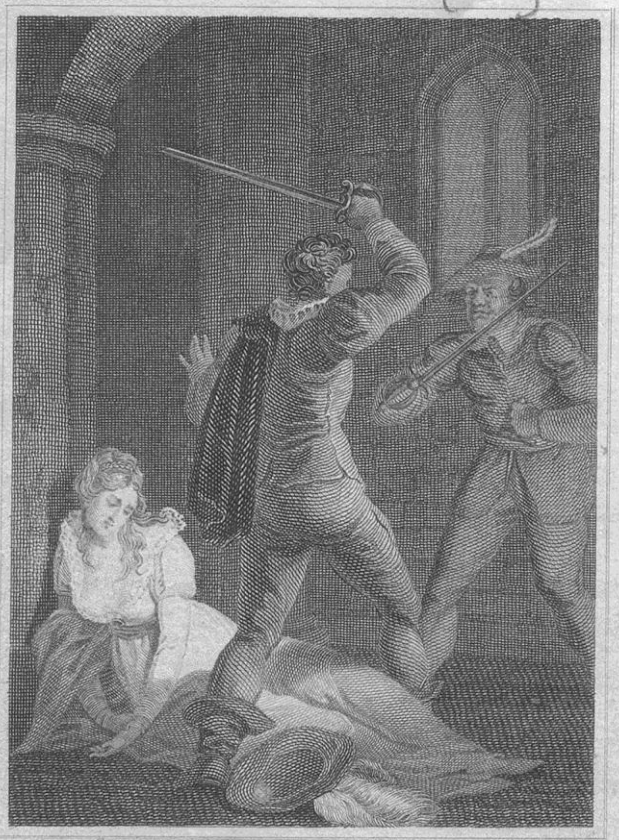
ROUSSEAU.

London:

Printed for T. HURST, No. 32, Paternoster-Row;

And sold by J. WALLIS, and T. HUGHES, Paternoster-Row; C. CHAPPLE, Pall-Mall; T. DEAN, Newgate-street; J. DINGLE, Bury; T. GIBBONS, Bath; T. RICHARDS, and W. GRAY, Plymouth; Messrs. CLARKE and Co. Manchester; & HARROD and TURNER, Nottingham.

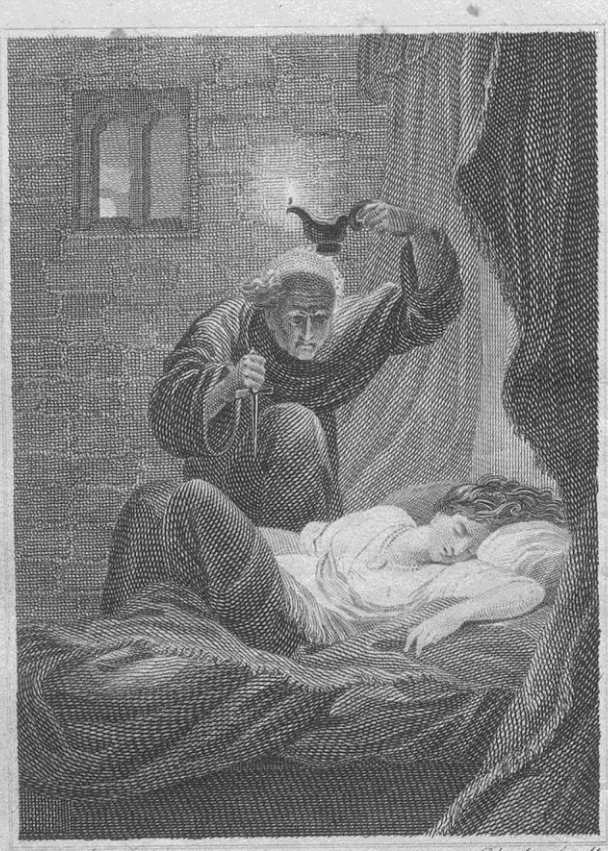
Printed by T. Plummer, Seething-Lane, Tower-Street.



Engraved by R. Rhodes from the original Picture by W. M. Craig.

THE SOUTHERN TOWER.

London: Publish'd 1st November 1802.



Craig Pinxit. Rhodes Sculpt.

THE MIDNIGHT ASSASSIN,
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London Published 1 May 1802.

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